



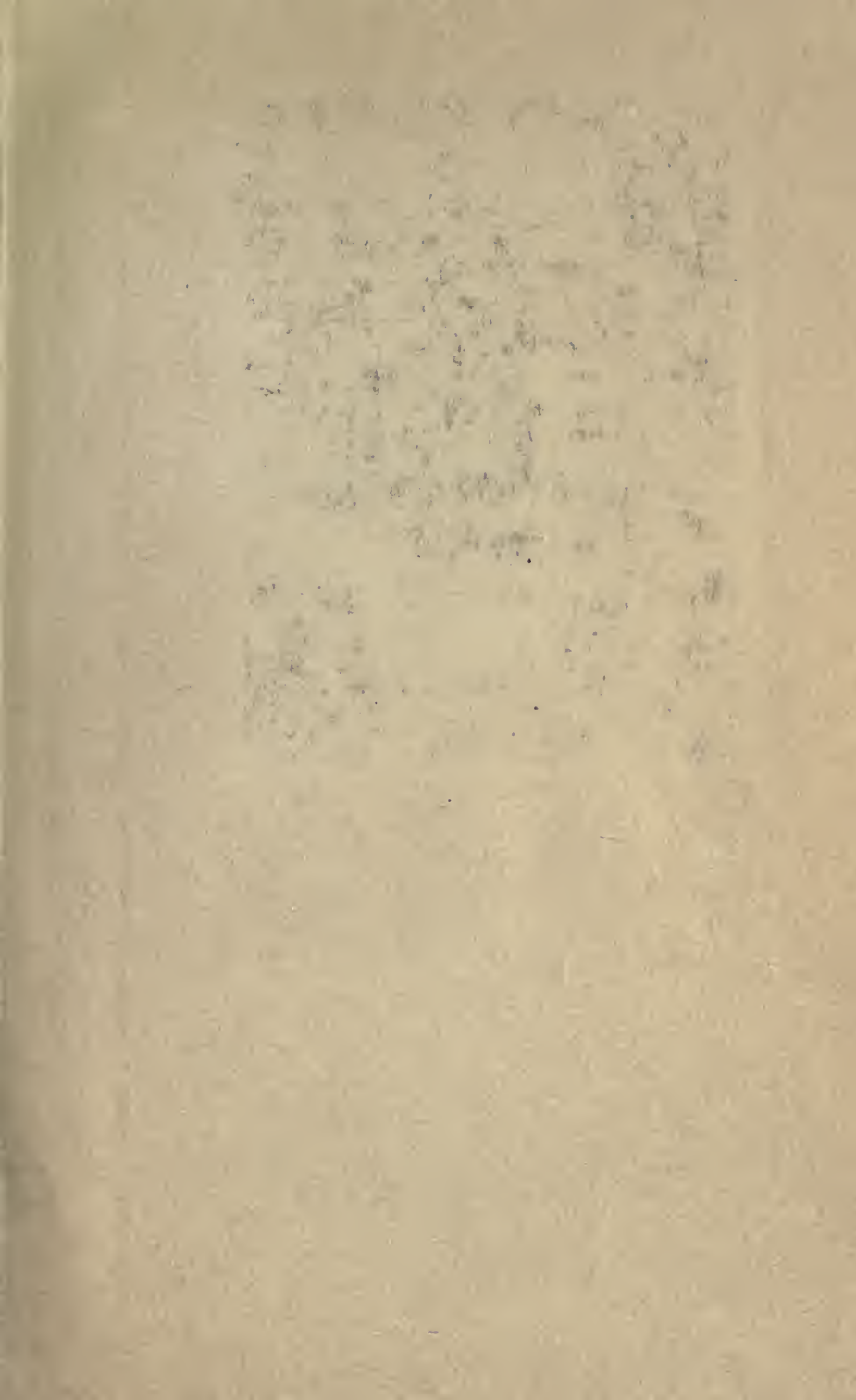
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*Lux ex Tenebris.*



Claus Spreckels Fund.





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*"The poor laboureth in his poor estate,  
and when he leaveth off he still is poor."*

ECCLESIASTICUS XXXI.

*"All these put their trust in their  
hands, and each becometh wise in his own  
work, without these shall not a city be  
inhabited, and men shall not sojourn nor  
walk up and down therein. They shall  
not be sought for in the council of the  
people and in the assembly they shall not  
mount on high . . . But they will  
maintain the fabric of the world; and  
in the handiwork of their craft is their  
prayer."—ECCLESIASTICUS XXXVIII.*

# MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

## A CASE FOR TRADE BOARDS

BEING THE RESULTS OF A YEAR'S  
INVESTIGATION INTO THE WORK  
OF WOMEN IN LONDON IN THE  
TAILORING, DRESSMAKING, AND  
UNDERCLOTHING TRADES

BY

MRS. CARL MEYER

AND

CLEMENTINA BLACK



LONDON  
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TO  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
BOARD OF TRADE





## PREFATORY NOTE

IN the course of this investigation we have received the most courteous and sympathetic help from almost all the persons from whom we have asked for it—often from people whose very names we do not know. To thank all of them separately is not possible. We owe especial gratitude to the Women's Industrial Council, which body, besides allowing us access to certain information, put at our disposal for a time the services of their specially employed investigator; and to the Outer London Inquiry Committee, who have permitted us to use their extremely valuable records of the house-to-house visitation of home workers in West Ham. The inclusion of these cases brings the total of those that have been before us in this work to a thousand, or rather more.

We are particularly indebted for assistance in our work to the Revs. J. E. Watts Ditchfield, C. H. Bowden, and Alured G. Clarke; to Mrs. Stead, of the Browning Settlement, Walworth, Mrs. Hawkins,

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Finally, we must express our warm sense of the services rendered by Miss Finlay Peacock and Miss Laura Donnell. Miss Peacock, whose post was that of Secretary to the Sub-Committee, contrived, in addition to her secretarial work of tabu-

lation, indexing, keeping accounts, and carrying on a great deal of correspondence, to find time also for a very considerable amount of actual investigation, and, although hitherto inexperienced, was singularly successful. Miss Donnell, whose help was unfortunately not available during all the time of the inquiry, brought to the work experience and trained ability. Both ladies showed unflagging energy, inexhaustible patience, and admirable tact. Should it be our lot to organise another inquiry, we could wish for no better helpers.

C. B.

A. M.

LONDON, *February* 1909.





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## INTRODUCTION

THIS volume contains the results of an investigation made, during the year 1908, into the conditions of women's work, in London, in the tailoring, dress-making and underclothing trades. Though collected primarily for a special purpose, the facts are, it is believed, of some general interest.

During the years 1906, 1907 and 1908 the project of a legal minimum wage, long advocated by some economists of the newer school, advanced rapidly into the sphere of practical politics. The *Daily News* exhibition of "sweated" goods and of underpaid workers, held in the summer of 1906, was followed by the formation of the National Anti-Sweating League, an association of which the sole aim is the establishment by law of a minimum wage. In 1907 and again in 1908 a Bill for the creation in this country of Wages Boards on the Australian model was discussed in the House of Commons, and on the latter occasion was read a second time without a division. A Special Commissioner was sent out by government to report upon the effects of Colonial legislation, and a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the conditions of Home Work.

By many persons of experience, and especially by the executive of the Anti-Sweating League, it was felt to be eminently desirable that detailed information should be collected about the trades in which Wages Boards seemed likely to be first instituted, *i.e.*, tailoring, dressmaking and the making of underclothing. Early in 1908 one of the authors of this book offered to pay the expenses of such an inquiry; the work of investigation was begun on January 20, under the guidance of a small sub-committee, and the results are here presented.

Before proceeding to accounts of the trades and of their various departments, it may be as well to give some notion of the manner in which an inquiry of this kind is carried out. We began by drafting two sets of questions, together with a few hints to investigators (*see* Appendix B). Our method, we had decided, should be mainly that of personal interviews with both employers and workers, and our visits to workers should come earliest. The first step, therefore, was to obtain the addresses of a number of women working in the three trades, a task in which no directory affords assistance. Such addresses can be procured only from the small group of devoted people who live or work in industrial districts: local clergy, of all denominations, organisers of girls' clubs, Settlements, branches of the Women's Co-operative Guild, officials of women's trade unions, &c. These busy and widely scattered persons it was advisable to see, experience teaching very clearly how comparatively feeble is the appeal of pen and ink. Perhaps the history of



one hot day when four of us descended upon a certain district of South London may serve as a sample of the sort of work that is needed as a basis for industrial investigation.

We alighted from a municipal tram in a busy but not wide thoroughfare, hot and full of mingled odours from the fruit, meat, fish, cheese, onions and other comestibles displayed freely in open shop windows. Sweet shops glowed with wares of vivid and alarming hues; vendors shouted; trams went grinding by, and busy pedestrians hustled each other on the narrow pavements. We divided into two parties, one pair going to one church, the second to another. These visits over, we were to meet again at a midway point and decide upon our further course.

The church to which the first pair were directing their steps appeared near on the map, but proved rather difficult to find. The door of the Rectory, when at last it was discovered, was opened by a woman of the caretaker description. The rector was away for his holiday. Who, they asked, was taking his duty? Mr. S. of St. Anne's. And where did Mr. S. live? In Victoria Terrace, out of Hanbury Road, on the other side of the High Street—third turning on the left. Having retraced their course, and taken the prescribed third turning, the investigators presently met their companions. These had been more fortunate; the clergyman upon whom they had called was at home and sympathetic, said his parish was full of underpaid people, would look up and send some addresses;

hoped that a minimum wage would be established, and spoke indignantly of Messrs. E. and D., manufacturers of the neighbourhood, whose rates of payment were scandalously low. Of one of these sinners he gave the address; the other lived in a certain street, but he could not recollect the number. He had also furnished the name and address of a lady who helped in the work of the church and who would be able and willing to supply names. This lady lived on the farther shore of that main river of traffic which we had already crossed.

Emerging from the little green enclosure in which we had stood to look out the various streets in our maps, we once more divided into pairs. To one couple fell the duty of seeking that especially ill-paying employer the number of whose workshop we did not know. The street proved to consist of small dwelling-houses, each with steps to its front door, a basement window and other three windows above. None bore any sign of being a work-place; no door stood open, no hand-cart waited before any house, nor was any person either approaching or leaving with a bundle. Twice was the hot street perambulated in the hope that some indication might present itself, but none did; and our effrontery was not equal to knocking at door after door, and so arousing the observation of the whole thoroughfare. We turned away, therefore, towards the other factory, which lay on the way to Victoria Terrace. This time there was no difficulty in finding the place; a woman with a bundle of work, walking ahead of us, served unconsciously as a

guide. We followed her in at the open door and addressed ourselves to a forewoman in a little office. In vain we explained to her that our inquiry was not inimical to employers and that no names would be published ; she would not allow us to see the workrooms, and her answers were of the briefest and least informing.\* We went on to Victoria Terrace, where the wife of Mr. S. of St. Anne's told us that her husband had gone over to administer a local charity at the church which we had previously visited, and that if we hurried, we should probably find him there. We did hurry, accordingly, crossed the high road again, and again approached the first church. Near to it we met a tired looking gentleman in clerical attire and ventured to stop him. Yes, this was Mr. S., and he was ready to listen to us, and to agree as to the desirability of a minimum wage. But he could give us no addresses. The population of the district, he told us, was migratory in the highest degree ; many families moved every few months. Miss H., who

\* At a later date an American lady, who happened to be with one of us in this same neighbourhood, had a long conversation with this woman, who gave her many particulars of hours, &c. Although her representations were, we believe, a little rose-coloured, we have evidence to show that the rates of payment in this factory are not on the very lowest scale. Of the other local employer, however, we eventually saw and copied a pay-sheet, the figures of which surprised even the experienced investigator to whom it was given. This man was paying  $5\frac{1}{2}d.$  apiece for the machining, in the worker's home, of girls' coats measuring 49 inches in length. Each had two capes, the upper one being scalloped, piped with velvet and faced inside with ribbon, besides having two rows of stitching. The worker seen—a capable person—said that she could make only one in a day.



presided over a girls' club, would certainly be able to tell us the addresses of some workers. She lived in Castle Street, a turning out of Middle Street, on the model estate in the rear of the church. After quite a prolonged conversation with Mr. S., who had incidentally told us much about the problems of housing and of Sunday trading, and given a glimpse of the beneficent activities that were being carried on in this rather depressing neighbourhood, we went on our way, reflecting, as we often found ourselves doing, during the course of the investigation, upon the value of the social work that is being done by religious bodies of all sorts in the poorer parts of London. If these bodies did no more—and of course they do vastly more—than provide for the presence in each poor district of a few educated persons ready to give time and knowledge to the service of their neighbours, the public importance of them would be very great. In some parishes, whatever there is of mental opportunity, of sociability or of enlightened recreation, emanates directly from the church or chapel, and if these influences were to disappear the whole level of the district would drop.

The lady who lived in Castle Street, out of Middle Street, was not at home; and since it was already close upon the hour at which the two parties were to meet for lunch, we permitted ourselves the very rare extravagance of a cab, and were bowled away through the hot streets. Our lunch, almost as a matter of course, was inferior. It is one of the drawbacks of an investigator's work that decent

meals are seldom procurable in the regions where that work is carried on. Indeed, at a later time we often carried food with us and sought some sequestered spot to eat it. We entertain pleasant memories of the old burying-ground around a Friends' Meeting House in a certain suburb, where the kind caretaker encouraged us to spend our luncheon interval, and where in the midst of a hot and fatiguing day we sat for three-quarters of an hour in the shade, with greenness and quietness around us. Another day two of us took our meal sitting on a pile of wood beside a countrified road in Upper Clapton, a green pasture on our right, and a half-built row of pretentious new houses before us. On this earlier occasion, however, we sat in a rather dark shop and tried to shut our eyes to the doubtful cleanliness of knives and forks.

Need we continue the history of the afternoon? One of the quartette went home, and her companion, left alone, called at five different addresses—travelling incidentally in three public conveyances—and succeeded in seeing two persons, from one of whom there was a promise of addresses. The other pair saw one clergyman, a retiring and scholarly old gentleman, to whom the uncongenial surroundings into which he had come late in life were a misery, the superintendent of a crèche, and a mission woman, a highly intelligent widow, who knew much about conditions in one of the trades, and who put us in the way of first-hand information. Our working day closed, at five o'clock, outside the Tube station at the Elephant and Castle, by which

time all three of us were thoroughly tired and eagerly desirous of soap and water.

Such is the preliminary work of investigation, and persons who pursue the task find themselves divided between emotions of remorse and of gratitude. The people upon whom we intrude are so busy, and they are—almost always—so kind. Our visits to them bear a painful resemblance to those of the enterprising agent who desires to sell a new variety of furniture polish. For our own purposes we enter their houses, demand their attention and take up their time. They, on their part, are not merely patient, they are often eagerly interested; sometimes they actually know our names beforehand, and welcome us almost as friends. Some of them—the Co-operative women always—give us tea; and how thankfully we receive that refreshment few people can guess, unless they have made similar peregrinations. Thus the disagreeable aspects of our task are compensated by a sense of kindly human fellowship, very warming and stimulating. In the course of our visits, however, we do sometimes notice a regrettable ignorance on the part of church workers, both of wide public questions and of economic laws. Of course it is difficult, when one's every moment is filled by claims for immediate practical help, to find time for keeping abreast of current thought; of course, too, constant intercourse with uncultivated minds tends to dull intellectual alertness. But since at the least a very considerable part of the suffering which all the benevolent are trying to alleviate is of economic



origin, and since every interposition is apt to produce economic results, it is surely very much worth while for all benevolent persons to study economic principles. Especially might workers in girls' clubs enhance immensely their possibilities of usefulness if they would—as already, indeed, many of them do—study the industrial conditions amid which their girls work, learn the provisions of the existing law in regard to hours, sanitation, safety, ventilation, temperature, compensation for injuries, &c., and find out what new laws are proposed that may affect women workers.

Sometimes such preliminary visits as have been sketched reveal merely the absence in a given district of the group of workers whom we are seeking. By degrees, however, a certain number of addresses is accumulated and then begins the visiting of actual workers. Then begins also what seems like an inordinate waste of time. Few pursuits, surely, can be better calculated to impress the fact of human fallibility than the pursuit of dwellers in poor neighbourhoods at addresses supposed to be theirs. The proportion of instances in which name, address or occupation proves to be incorrectly given is quite astonishing; and only a knowledge of London comparable with Mr. Samuel Weller's would render possible the identification of streets masquerading under this or that odd *alias*. It is easy enough to see how mistakes arise. A girl who uses the slovenly, slurring cockney speech dictates her name and address to some lady at her club, who on her part does not live in the district

and is not familiar with its lesser thoroughfares. An h, perhaps, drops out of the surname; Charrington Street becomes Canton Street; Manor House Road gets registered as Manners Road; and, by-and-by, some investigator goes seeking Miss Horton, of Charrington Street, Manor House Road, as Miss Alton, of Canton Street, Manners Road, and, not unnaturally, loses a good deal of time before picking up the right trail. Moreover, in London, the distances to be traversed occupy no inconsiderable time; the workers inhabit not only many different quarters of the town but also suburbs at every point of the compass; those employed in factories can be seen only in the evening or on Saturday afternoon; an entire day may be spent in finding the abodes of half a dozen women, three of whom will prove to be out. On one Saturday afternoon, for instance, eight houses were visited in succession, and only one person was found at home.

When found, the workers are often, and very naturally, at first inclined to be suspicious. It is necessary to explain to them the purpose of the inquiry and to assure them that no name will be made public; it is also necessary to let them tell their story in their own way. One has to hear far more than merely the industrial facts that one sets out to learn. The additional information is often very interesting—as a glimpse into any human life can hardly fail to be—but listening to it is apt to take a long time. Few persons who have not tried would guess how small is the number of “cases” that a competent investigator can collect in a day.

Perhaps also few persons would guess how extremely rare it is to be received otherwise than courteously and communicatively. Home workers, especially, often seem really glad to see somebody whose visit breaks the monotony of their toil, and who shows genuine interest in their concerns. And if one has occasion to make a second call, the friendly smile of recognition and welcome sets one reflecting upon the dulness of a life in which the intrusion of an inquisitive stranger forms an agreeable landmark. On a retrospect of our twelve months' work, the essential virtues of the woman worker—her patience, her industry, her marked sense of fair play—stand out very clearly. Emphatically, the large majority of the women whom we have visited are good citizens who deserve well of their country, and who mostly receive, in return for prolonged and patient labour, a very small share in the joys, the comforts or the beauties of life. To go among them is to be at the same time gratified by a deepening sense of human worth and oppressed by the intolerable weight of human burdens.

Some horribly sad facts remain impressed upon the memories of those who have been active in this investigation. Two of us were busy for several days in a small district situated between what were once two pleasant residential suburbs. Fine historical houses lie on both sides, but in the little intermediate patch there is not one. Nothing is old but everything is shabby. Grey streets of mean dwelling-houses are punctuated by struggling shops that display tinned foods and galvanised pails ; even



the few public-houses show no sign of prosperity, and the church looks like the surrounding streets—at once new, poor and shabby. One or two of the streets are still unfinished ; beyond them lies rough open land ; fifteen years ago, perhaps ten years ago, this must have been a “building estate.” To-day it is a pool of poverty, deep in the middle, shallower on the borders. Its inhabitants are not (as is the case in some outlying districts) vicious and foul of speech. They are quiet and peaceable, they seem, comparatively speaking, sober. Passing through these mournful thoroughfares one is not haunted by the thought that often besets the experienced visitor : “What a pandemonium this place must be at night !” And indeed it is nothing of the kind. The two ladies, who, thanks to a local Church worker, were able to survey this district pretty thoroughly, spent several evenings here, calling upon factory workers. At just after ten o’clock one night they made their last call and inquired for Miss X. “who works, I believe, in the under-linen.” A woman came rushing out in her night-dress from some back room, she had caught a word or two, had hoped that she might be the person inquired for, and had sprung from her bed in fear that a chance of work might pass her by. She was a deserted wife with two small children and she made pompons for babies’ shoes, “the best silk work,” but did not get enough work to keep the children properly.

A street or two away live Mr. and Mrs. W. She is a tailoress and is paid about 1*d.* per hour.

He is paralysed, but in order to save her time he carries her work to and fro. An hour each way does this poor crippled elderly man spend going with his bundle to the factory and back, and all that he and his wife ask of the world is sufficient work at sufficient pay to enable them to live on in their present way. But they are nearly starved, and the Poor Law authorities will not give them out-relief. Their rooms, it is true, are far from clean, and so are their persons. Their friends at the church advise their going into "the house." But Mrs. W. resists. "I should never get out again," she says. "They want me to come in because they know I am a good worker. They would keep me there if once I went. But I won't go. I'll die sooner." Probably the workhouse will win the battle. Her health will give way under long continued anxiety and privation; ill, she will be taken, whether she will or no, to the infirmary, and there, having lost the last stimulus remaining to her, will not have hope enough left to recover.

Not a hundred yards from Mr. and Mrs. W. on the outer edge of this depressing district, lives Miss P., also a home worker and also a tailoress. The conditions of her life, however, differ in every way from those of theirs. Her home, which she shares with a brother and sister, is clean and comfortable; her person and dress are neat and immaculate, she speaks carefully and with a good choice of words; she is, to the most superficial observation, a self-respecting, superior woman. The two sisters work together at waistcoat-making, and when visited,



were engaged upon garments of a sort of corrugated stuff that simulated knitting. They put in the front pieces, bind these and the armholes, and make the three pockets. For this they are paid 9s. per dozen, they providing machine and cotton. Her machine was purchased long ago and has never needed repairing; cotton costs slightly less than fourpence for a dozen waistcoats. Work is fetched and returned twice a week, the sisters undertaking the journey alternately and paying fourpence each time for fares. On the previous day, working together from 9.30 to 7.30 the sisters had earned 7s. 6d., or 3s. 9d. each. Allowing an hour out of their day for meals, they would be earning 5d. an hour, less cost of cotton (not 3½d. a day) and less also a penny and ⅓ of a penny as a proportion of weekly travelling expenses. Their work is performed in a clean, comfortable and quiet room, the rent of the whole house, of six rooms, is 9s., the share of each tenant being thus 3s. a week. If the two sisters, instead of working at home were obliged to go into their employer's factory, the fares of each would amount to 2s. a week. Thus to these two worthy women it would be a real injury if home work were to be abolished.

Nor must it be supposed that the wages of the inside worker are at all necessarily higher than those of home workers. Many women working in the workshops of tailors in various parts of London are being worse paid than Miss P. and her sister. For instance, we called one Saturday afternoon at a house in a very poor and rather rough street lying

near to quite wealthy residential districts. The door stood open and the girl whom we came to see was scrubbing the little entry within. Looking up she showed us the delicate colouring and refined features not uncommon among London workgirls, though few girls are so extremely good-looking as she is. She was a tailoress, employed at the workshop where she had learned her trade, and her weekly wage was 7s. 6d. Her father had been out of work nearly all the winter; her mother was ill in bed; there were younger children to feed and clothe. From 8 to 8, five days a week, from 8 to 4 on Saturdays, she spent in the workroom, receiving a wage of a shade over 1½d. an hour, and now at half-past four on Saturday she was taking up the second trade of nearly every woman and toiling at household tasks. The heart sinks at the realisation of the burdens resting upon that young girl's shoulders and of the temptations that, conspicuously handsome as she is, must continually beset her.

Hers is not the only trade in which indoor workers are sometimes as ill paid as any home workers. Many blouses of handsome material and of excellent workmanship are made in large and well-equipped factories by girls who are paid considerably below 10s. a week. A silk blouse was shown to one of us for the making of which 10d. had been paid. Back and front were composed entirely of small tucks \* and of insertions of lace.

\* These tucks were not previously made in the material, as is sometimes the case, nor were they made by that 5- or 7-needle machine which runs parallel tucks simultaneously.

The retail price of the garment would have been from 17s. to 25s. The worker, a skilled young woman, could not make two such blouses in a day. In many cases, too, the indoor worker is made to pay for the use of mechanical power, and this tax is sometimes heavy. In one factory visited by us, workers pay 6d. a week for power, 3d. a week for the use of a kitchen, and provide the cotton that sews together the garments manufactured.

At best, the life of the woman earning a wage by some form of needlework is no easy one; and if, being dependent upon herself, she earns—as most women do—anything much short of £1 a week, she must go short of everything beyond the very barest necessities. Girls partly supported by their relatives may enjoy a temporary and factitious prosperity, but, unless they marry, time by depriving them of these relatives, or by rendering elders no longer capable of supporting even themselves, eventually demands heavy repayment for the short period of comfort. In middle age many a woman who has never received a wage large enough to support her is faced by the need of supporting upon it an aged parent as well as herself. The unmarried woman, however indigent, never, in our experience, allows her old mother to go to the workhouse. As long as there is an unmarried daughter the mother lives with her. Marriage which, looked at in anticipation, presents itself as a way out, proves often but a second underpaid employment added on to the first. The wages of men in many branches of industry are not sufficient



for the support of a growing family. The mother, who has to cook, clean, and wash for all, is driven to take some work that will add to the exiguous store of shillings available for household needs. The larger her family the more she finds herself compelled to neglect the children in order to earn clothing and food for them. Underpayment, borne gaily enough in girlhood, when she defrayed but a part of her real expenses, grows an intolerable burden upon the wife and mother. She hastens to send out her own girls that their earning may lighten the pressure, and the story begins over again for them. A small minority of the unusually quick, clever or fortunate rise to the higher positions, in which princely incomes of as much as 30s. a week may be gained, but for the great majority of indoor as of outdoor workers life is a steady round of work at high pressure combined with a ceaseless effort to make a weekly ten shillings equal to a pound. The spectre of slack time and the more dreadful spectre of unemployment are always lurking in the background. Life is one long drawn out uncertainty, in which the sole sure point is that age will be even less employed and even worse paid. That, in such circumstances, so many women go on quietly persisting in their toil, not often complaining aloud, although bitterly conscious that somehow they are not getting fair play, is, for those who have eyes to see, one of the strongest possible indictments of that social muddle which we are pleased to call a system. They are such good human material and for the most part so wasted. In a

world of clamour the silent and long-suffering are exceedingly apt to be overlooked, although their patience forms an additional claim. If there is any immediate means by which legislation might diminish the evil of underpayment, it is the highest time that legislation should intervene in aid of a law-abiding, industrious and greatly oppressed class of citizens.



## CHAPTER I

### TAILORING. BESPOKE WORK ; MEN'S CLOTHES

TAILORING, like most other modern trades, and like all civilised societies, is in a state of transition. There are still people working in that primary stage in which one person cuts out and makes, singly and entirely, a garment for some other person. Two of the investigators engaged in this inquiry have, for instance, in the course of it, had coats made for them by a woman who cut, fitted and finished these garments completely without the assistance of any second worker. But of course no great part of London's tailoring is produced in this way. Quite a large part, however, of the very best coats and waistcoats are made under a system very little more highly involved. They are made, that is to say, in the homes of workers who receive them, already cut out, straight from the man who has taken the customer's order and who hopes, in due time, also to take the customer's money. The homemaker may make the garment entirely (we know of one such instance in regard to coats and of many in regard to waistcoats) or may, being a man, do everything except fell in the linings and make the buttonholes. In that case he will

probably pay some woman for doing these things, or he may deliver his work unfinished and the employer may hand it out again to the woman. Or, and this is perhaps a more usual way, the man who takes out coats may employ other people to help him on his own premises. From this stage to that of the full-blown middleman is but a step, and the line that divides the middleman from the wholesale manufacturer is but a fine one. The wholesale factory in its highest development is a great building of many rooms, fitted with costly power-driven machines of many kinds—cutting machines, electrically heated pressing irons, sewing machines, button-hole machines, even, we hear, machines for sewing on buttons, though we ourselves have not seen any of these in action. Subdivision is the guiding principle of these great factories, and hand-work is reduced to the smallest possible proportions, while in the more individualist West-end trade, hand-work still rules. Naturally, the two branches of the trade are absolutely distinct, and each branch presents many differing variations of method. The following chapters, although every description contained in them is derived from first-hand investigation, cannot claim to have exhausted these varieties. That we are truly representing the main currents we are convinced, but there may be little backwaters that have escaped our explorations. There may, for instance, although we know of none, exist some retail tailor in the West-end upon whose premises all the clothes that he sells are made. On the other hand we know of many upon whose

premises no garment is ever made. Our inclination is to believe that no retail tailor in the West-end has all, or indeed more than a very small proportion of his work, done indoors. Upon the retail tailor's premises the customer chooses his material and his design. His dimensions are noted by a grave official with a measuring tape, a time is fixed for him to come and be fitted, and he goes away, supposing most likely that his coat will be forthwith cut out and handed to men sitting upstairs or downstairs in a workshop. Cut out, the coat, indeed, generally is, but instead of being handed to men sitting above or below stairs, it remains, a rolled-up bundle of segments until some homeworker, or more probably some emissary of a homeworker—generally in the shape of a boy or girl—appears bringing a square parcel in a wrapper. That square parcel will contain a coat, generally a finished one; the bundle of pieces will be handed over and the young messenger will hurry away. The home workshop is close at hand—the old streets of Soho are full of tailor's workshops—the child mounts perhaps some staircase whose wide shallow treads and carved balustrades speak of bygone wealth, and passes into a room that probably enough is still panelled behind its wall paper. But the house, built originally to accommodate one family, will most likely possess a water tap on one floor only, and will certainly not have separate kitchen fittings for all its present inhabitants.

In the workroom there will be a large uncovered table, a smell of hot irons and of hot cloth, a sewing



machine, a pair of sharp, bright shears, and a sleeve-board; the floor will be littered with snippings. The persons at work will very often be two men and a woman, whose work will be the felling in of linings, and the making of buttonholes. Such is the type of the smallest domestic workshop, in which the workers are often all members of one family, more frequently perhaps than not, Jewish, and, if Jewish, generally of foreign origin, though possibly English born. The presence in London of these industrious people is largely due to the well-founded terror entertained by Jewish youths of service in the Russian Army, and one reason why they are working at home is that they are thus able to keep their Sabbath. The employer, whose own rent is apt to be exorbitant, is very ready to avoid paying additional rent for a workshop. The homeworking Jewish tailors whom we visited in the West-end were highly skilled workmen and the majority of them were being paid according to the "log."\* We are informed, however, that many Jews are paid below this scale.

Upon the shoulders of the homeworking tailor rest the expenses of rent, light and firing; of appliances; of assistance; and often, but not always, of "sewings," a term that covers cotton, thread, silk,

\* The "log" is the elaborate schedule of prices observed by the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and by a majority of West-end master tailors. It is calculated upon a time basis of sevenpence per hour, and an employer may either pay a time-wage of not less than that rate, or a piece-wage according to the schedule. The expressions, "a sevenpenny shop," "the sevenpenny log," which appear so mysterious on a first hearing, are thus easily explained.

&c. The total of these deductions is not trifling. Rent, in Soho, is excessively high. For example, 9s. a week is paid for a large single room. A man who, having many children, is, very properly, not allowed by the sanitary authorities to house his whole family in a three-roomed tenement, has been obliged to rent a second and pays 11s. 6d. for each : that is to say, 23s. a week in all for six rooms neither spacious, nor airy, nor yet agreeably situated. Firing and lighting are considerable items, and sewing silk, as most female readers will be aware, is by no means cheap.

Schedules of expenses obtained from different workers agree closely in details. Mr. Z., who has working with him two men, his daughter and a younger girl, pays 10s. a week for his workroom, which is large and light ; 5s. for gas 1s. 6d. for hire of machine ; and the wages of the two men and the young girl. The girl receives 9s. in slack times as well as in busy ones. His two journeymen were at the time of our visit (in the slack season) almost unoccupied, but he kept them on, as he told us, because, if he did not, he might not be able to secure them again when the busy time returned. At this period he was paying 15s. a week to the elder of them, who had a wife and children, whereas "this young man is not married ; he can do with 10s." Even at these low rates, Mr. Z. was disbursing 25s. a week, practically as a retaining fee for men whose labour did not, for many weeks at a stretch, repay him. The weekly outlay of Mr. Z. in the slack season thus amounts to £2 10s. 6d.



exclusive of "sewings"—an item not very considerable in the lean weeks. In the busy time it becomes larger. Of sewing silk at 1s. 6d. a reel two reels will, when all hands are busy, be consumed in a week. His irons cost 4s. each, his shears have to be frequently sharpened at a cost of 1s., and the machine requires needles and oil. Miss Z., it should perhaps be explained, is not employed by her father, although she does her work in his workroom. She makes waistcoats for the same employer who gives out coats to her father, and is paid directly.

Another man, Mr. Y., in whose room the very best dress, frock and lounge coats are made, employs a son and daughter. The son, who owing to his father's limited comprehension of English was our chief informant, was an interesting and highly intelligent lad, apparently about eighteen or nineteen. He quickly understood the drift of our inquiry and showed us documentary evidence of the way in which wages apparently high are reduced by the expenses of rent, assistance and other charges.

In many cases the homeworking tailor goes to the employer's shop to fit on the customer's coat; in other cases fitting is performed by the employer or by one of his subordinates.\* It will sometimes happen that the coat required for fitting has not been sent in when the customer arrives to keep his appointment; he will then be politely informed that the fitter is engaged with another customer, and

\* We have found one case—there may be many—in which a homeworking tailor comes all the way from the East-end to fit ladies' coats for customers of a West-end firm.

while he waits, a messenger is sent off in a cab to fetch the garment, the fare—and sometimes something more—being charged to the worker. But when, as frequently happens, it is the worker or his messenger who is kept waiting, no compensation is given. There is at least one tailor's shop in West London which has no back door, and, since significant bundles must not come under the eyes of customers, it is strictly forbidden to bring work through the shop if a customer happens to be there. As gentlemen are sometimes apt to be deliberate in choosing their materials, a good deal of time may be lost in waiting for their departure.

The line is a fine one that divides the home workshop, properly so-called, from the workshop separately hired. Of late the pressure of high rents in and about Soho has driven many working tailors to remove their families to the cheaper and airier regions of Shepherd's Bush or Finchley.\* The father, who must be within a few minutes' walk of his master's shop, hires a single room in town, and with perhaps a son, or daughter, or both, travels to and fro, morning and evening. The family is better and more healthily housed, but the father's comforts are apt to be less. His midday meal is either more costly or less ample, and his long day is prolonged by a journey at each end. It was in a workshop of this sort that an intelligent foreigner, not remarkable for personal cleanliness,

\* A lady personally acquainted with a large number of West-end tailoresses tells us that within one year she knew of fifty families who thus left West London.

attired himself in the fur-lined motor coat that he was making, in order to exhibit to us its full beauties.

Another variety of workshop, more complex and of more recent date than the genuine domestic workshop, seems to be growing more and more common in the West Central district. This is what may be called the compound workshop, specially erected for the accommodation of a number of tailors, all of whom share light, fire and some of the necessary appliances, and each of whom pays for his own "sitting" and for that of his female assistant, if he has one.\*

In the case about which we have fullest details each man pays 3s. a week for his own seat, and 1s. for the woman's. The room is provided with tables, chairs, sewing machines, light (incandescent gas), and a coke fire for irons, the fireplace being ingeniously arranged to serve two adjacent work-rooms. Forty persons can be accommodated here, but in May 1908, the room was occupied only by 22 men and 14 women, a number which yields to the letter-out (in this case a woman) a gross weekly total of £4. What rent the letter-out herself pays we do not know, but if we may venture to guess, nearer to £2 weekly than to £1.

\* Any person anxious to see a workshop of this description may easily do so by visiting Marshall House, Marshall Street, and ascending one of the open stairways that give access to the exterior dwellings. This curious and cleverly planned block has for its core a building that seems to be composed chiefly of windows, and here, as in a hive, the workers may be observed industriously sewing, pressing, and machining coats and trousers.



In workshops of all these types women are working in the West-end tailoring trade, and a certain number are also working in their own living rooms.

Theoretically, West-end tailoring is still a handicraft, and the best coats are in fact still mainly made by hand, though the machine is encroaching upon pockets. There seems, indeed, no reason why pockets should be hand-made. In a pocket there is no particular need for that superior elasticity which, in combination with firmness, is supposed to be the merit of hand sewing. It appears also to be the case that the seams of even very good trousers are increasingly stitched by machine, and that women are being more and more employed in making them.

The seams in the case of hand-made coats and trousers are considered to be the work of men, the woman's province being to fell in linings and make buttonholes. One woman, however, has been seen by us who—unlike any man we have seen—does every stitch in the making of a coat. This old lady has been employed for 35 years by a very well-known firm. As a girl she helped her mother, a waistcoat maker; as a wife, she learned from her husband to make coats, and now, as a widow, supports herself by making them. She works quite alone, and is paid by the "log," according to the nature of the different coats. Some of these are made entirely by hand, some have a certain amount of machine work. Her weekly earnings during the busy season are about £2 10s., and her average throughout the year 25s. Many a gentleman of



fashion must have worn coats made by this woman, whose case is a complete refutation of the assurance given to one of our investigators that women "can't really make a coat; some of them think they can, but they can't."

As a rule the West-end tailoress, if a coat hand, works with a tailor, and her wages are more often than not paid by him, not by the master from whom he takes work. Her usual earnings will be from 4s. a day, upwards; but of course she is not paid when not at work. Thus one capable woman working in the combined workroom described above is paid 30s. a week, but not above half the weeks in her year will be really full ones. Her hours will be long; 8—8, five days a week, and 8—4 on Saturdays or Sundays are the almost invariable hours of tailoresses in workshops.

Some women make buttonholes at home, and are of course paid by the piece. A penny a piece for large holes, a halfpenny apiece for small is the usual rate. This seems to work out at about fourpence an hour.\*

✓ The slack season, long for all workers in the bespoke tailoring trade, is for some reason or another, particularly long in the coat-making branch. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that for some workers it covers half the year. A small number of people, engaged upon hunting coats or theatrical coats, are

\* A woman known to one of the authors once made over 100 waistcoat buttonholes of the best class in a day—108, if memory serves, was the figure. This total was considered as remarkable and as impossible of repeated daily attainment. At a halfpenny each, 108 would bring her in 4s. 6d. for, no doubt, ten and a half hours of work, or slightly over 4½d. per hour.

however fairly busy throughout the year. One young woman, for instance, who “finishes” a good many scarlet coats in the course of a twelvemonth, reports “very little slack time.” Another, whose employer makes not only court, but also military and theatrical coats, has “not much slack time.” She is paid 4s. 6d. a day, and being a Jewess, works as a rule only five days a week, her weekly income when in full work being thus 22s. 6d. Occasionally she works a few hours on Sunday. It is an interesting question whether her habit of resting on two Sabbaths has any influence in regularising her work. Such cases as hers are the fortunate exceptions; the majority of women engaged in the making of coats for West-end wearers are exceedingly busy during the pleasant seasons of Spring and early Summer, unoccupied in August and September, partially or fully occupied in October and November, little occupied during the end of the year and the month of January, and almost without work in February. These alternations of hard work and unemployment render the West-end coat trade a very trying one, and reduce to a low average throughout the year the comparatively high wage paid during the busy season. For women it has some other disadvantages. Their part of the work is monotonous, the garment is comparatively heavy, and the skill ultimately attainable is rather the speed won by practice than the development that grows out of intelligent study. Then the work is more often than not carried on side by side with men. That this is necessarily deleterious, far be it from us

to suggest ; often the men are of the woman's own family, always they are of her own class. Still it cannot be considered a very desirable thing for a young girl to be the only worker of her own sex—and many girls are in this position—in a workshop occupied by two or three men or by one man.

Waistcoat making, which may almost be regarded as a separate trade, offers much better openings. Indeed, the women who make the best kinds of waistcoats are among the best paid and the least dependent of workers with the needle. It is hardly overstating the case to say that, as far as the bespoke trade is concerned, waistcoat making is in the hands of women. This branch of tailoring is one of the very few trades of women which continues, up to the present time, to afford to most of those who pursue it a wage upon which they can decently live. Moreover, for some unexplained reason, there seems to be less slack time in waistcoat making than in coat making. Possibly, waistcoats vary less in fashion, or possibly they wear out more rapidly than coats, and therefore the customer replenishes his stock more frequently. Be this as it may, waistcoat workers on the whole (though we have some complaints of long slack seasons) appear to enjoy more regularity of employment than coat makers.

In the West-end, the maker of waistcoats is almost always a homeworker, and in many of the cases visited by us she gets her work direct from the retail tailor. There are, however, some small workshops where a few workers are employed by a



man or woman. We have seen waistcoats for some of the very best tailors being made in living rooms. It is fair to add that these rooms were always clean. The best waistcoats, like the best coats, are entirely hand-made, and the production of them demands much skill and prolonged training. Three years is the general time allowed, and two years the very shortest period, in which a girl can become proficient. The line of stitching at the edge of a good waistcoat—so even that the careless observer takes it for machine work—is one of the test points of the worker's skill. In a good example, the flow of the line should be as smooth and regular as in a freehand drawing. Pockets, again, are quick to betray the unskilled hand; to put in a pocket flatly, firmly, strongly and without either bulge or pucker, is a feat only to be achieved after very many attempts.

The homemaker, of course, is paid by the piece. One woman, who has worked for many years for a fashionable firm, makes fancy and dress waistcoats at 5s. each, and when she has work enough can, by working very long hours, make 30s. a week. Her employer, she says, is considerate and tries to give work, "if you want it badly," but in autumn there is hardly any work to be done. In the week when she was visited she had earned but 1s. between Monday and Thursday. Whether this amount represents the finishing of a job already begun, or perhaps some alteration, does not appear.

A widow receives from 5s. 3d. to 6s. 6d. for a



morning waistcoat with four pockets, when made entirely by hand. If the pockets are machined 1s. 6d. less is paid. In her case all materials are provided. This woman tells us that an employer for whom she used to work, one day offered her "2s. 6d. less than usual for the three waistcoats that she had just finished," whereupon she refused to work for him any more. It is unfortunately almost certain that he would find some woman to accept the lower rate.

A single woman makes tweed waistcoats at 4s. 9d. each and dress waistcoats at 5s. Some employers, she tells us, pay 7s. 6d. for dress waistcoats, but work for them is irregular and she therefore prefers the five shilling ones. Like most workers, she reports that she can make a waistcoat in a day, and does not add, as others do, that the day has to be a very long one. Her work, however, is not done entirely by hand, and of course machining takes less time.

Another homemaker is employed by a firm most of whose customers are doctors; in her case the machine is used more largely and she reports that she can make a waistcoat and a half, of the medium kind, in a day, but cannot quite complete a hand-made garment in one day. Her payments begin at 3s. and run up to 7s. 3½d., the greater number of medium waistcoats working out at 4s. 3d. each.

In workshops a time wage is often paid. We have instances of 3s. a day and of 15s. a week. The work in these cases, we are inclined to think, is

not of quite so high a quality as in the other cases quoted.

We have been speaking hitherto mainly of bespoke work in its higher branches, but of course it is not only the inhabitants of fashionable districts who order their clothes to be made for them to their own measure. The City tailor who supplies good middle-class clothes generally follows the methods of the West-end and gives out his work to a small workshop or to single workers. Sometimes garments of this kind may be met with in the poor streets of the East-end, sometimes the makers of them dwell in comparative comfort in the Central district. How far either district is encroaching on the other we cannot be sure, but incline to think that the lower prices and conditions are gaining upon the better ones. Rates of payment are always lower than those current in the West-end; on the other hand the work, though often very good, is not of quite so high a standard, and irregularity is less severe. But while, in the West-end, there seems to be considerable fixity of rate, the slightly lower grade of tailoring shows great variations, and workers on this level have before their eyes the constant terror of lowered payment.

Mr. N., for instance, has for many years made coats for a tailor whose shop is within a quarter of a mile of the General Post Office. His own abode is a fine old house which we suspect to have been formerly inhabited by the clergy of the neighbouring church. His rent is £80 and his rates and taxes about £30. His large and airy workroom is

occupied by about three or four men and four young women. A boy is employed to take the work to and fro and does so three times a day. His head man has worked for him for twenty years and is also his lodger, occupying the top floor of the house. Mr. N., an elderly man, intelligent and energetic, gave us the impression of great respectability. He told us—with perfect truth as we believe—that the margin of profit for an employer in his position is very small, and added that when there have to be alterations after fitting his profit disappears altogether. He is paid 17s. for a dress coat, as against 25s. in the West-end; but the work probably occupies less time. He pays to his women workers 4s. per day, and probably their yearly average is as high as that of a West-end tailoress who is being paid 5s. But his prospect of continuing at the same rates is more uncertain than is that of most West-end tailors; he apprehends that when “the old governor” dies or retires, he may not find himself so comfortable with “the youngster who is coming on.” The remark sets us meditating on the prospects of Mr. N.’s future should this young gentleman follow the example of so many of his competitors and cut down his rates of payment. Mr. N. will almost inevitably fall, one way or another, into an old age of poverty, and the men and women now working in fairly good conditions for him, will only too probably find themselves driven to accept worse conditions and lower payments elsewhere.

Another coat maker who works not for the



“private” tailor but for a contractor in a large way of business stands in much the same position as Mr. N., the position that is of occupying a house of good appearance and of employing a staff of hands while making by his profits of management no more than a journeyman’s wage. When we visited him, he and his workers were engaged on cadets’ coats of khaki-coloured cloth, each of which has a belt, four folded pockets, closing with button and buttonhole, and a “stand and fall” collar inside of which a linen collar was to be fixed by means of five studs. The stud holes had of course to be made. 13s. was paid for each coat, and all necessary materials and “sewings” were provided. Mr. O. declared that his real income was larger when as a journeyman he lived in the East-end and came up to work, at a weekly wage of £2 5s. in the West-end. Finding him in a communicative mood, we led him on to make this out, and he gave us some interesting details of his previous week’s receipts and disbursements. We noted that he did not include any charge for machines, tools, &c., nor for heating the room, though our visit took place in February. He had received for work done £9 14s., a sum, as he remarked, that would probably strike his employer as very ample. He employed two men, besides paying by the piece for pressing, and also two girls, daughters of his own. To one man he had paid £2 2s. 9d.; to the second £1 19s. 6d.: for pressing 15s. 6d. (as 1s. 6d. is a very usual price for each coat this possibly represents twelve coats, and the total payment for each would in that case have



been 16s. 2d.). The wages of the two girls, for 5½ days' work, were 19s. 3d. each. Gas cost 3s., the rent of the workroom he estimated at 6s. 6d. (out of a total rent of 23s. 6d.), and "trimmings" amounted to 4s., an item which showed that the cadet coats had not been in hand in the week in question. 4d. per coat for "trimmings" is by no means a high estimate, and indeed we know enough to be sure that Mr. O. rather understated than overstated his expenses. His total was thus £7 9s. 6d., and the balance in his favour £2 5s. 6d. As his rent amounted to a further 17s., as he had a sick wife and a large family, we were inclined to fancy that the expenditure of the household must have exceeded his income. A question brought out the fact that the two daughters had not, in truth, received the whole of their nineteen and threepences. We have some doubt whether they had received more than a very small portion of them. The case of the Misses O. is not a very rare one. Again and again we find in our case-papers the sentence: "Gives her money to her mother." The parents of wage-earning girls seem, in a good many cases, to recognise no right of their daughters to dispose of the product of their own labour. Sons, even when quite young, appear to pay a fixed contribution towards the household expenses—a much healthier arrangement. Cases have been met in which a son has paid a comparatively small fixed share, while the whole of the daughter's earnings, less than her brother's but considerably more than his contribution, have been regularly handed over to the

mother. We need not labour this point, nor generalise unduly, but our observations do lead us to think that very frequently parents expect to have the spending of a higher sum from their girls (who generally earn less) than from their boys (who generally earn more) and that this state of things where it occurs is bad for all parties. To return to the case of Mr. O. himself: we can see that in slack times his household must suffer severely, and would inevitably accumulate debts to be paid off when the next busy time came. Yet, to a superficial observer, unacquainted with the inner details of the case, a man receiving from his employer £9 14s. in a single week, and paying a rent of 23s. 6d., might appear as the very type of a prosperous workman, and any condition of indebtedness on his part as a shocking instance of thriftlessness. Great indeed is the difference between gross and net takings in the case of a "small" tailor who works for a "large" one; and high also is the toll levied by the landlord upon the man who must do his work within a certain restricted area.

A young woman of twenty-five makes all sorts of waistcoats for a city firm, is paid from 3s. to 5s. 6d. according to the type of the garment, and makes about 4½d. to 5d. an hour. She and her brother, also a tailor, work together, and have a comfortable home. She does not complain of slack time, and very likely makes a higher yearly income than many a West-end waistcoat maker. Her rent (the precise figure of which we do not know) would certainly be lower.

Very different is the case—a fairly typical one—of a man whom we saw at work in one of the specially designed workshops of which many have been erected of late years in the East-end. He works for two employers, one in the City, one in the West Central district. The waistcoats are all for private customers and therefore all slightly different. The persons at work at the time of our visit were Mr. P., his wife, and a young daughter who was learning; a young man machinist and a young girl buttonholer. One of Mr. P.'s sons, a boy, takes the work to and fro. The waistcoats are cut out before they come.\* The edges are tacked by Mrs. P. or by her daughter, then the man machines the seams and edges, and is paid 3*d.* per waistcoat. Mr. P. presses and does whatever cutting may be needed, chalks places of pockets, buttons, holes, &c. Probably, though he did not say so, he also machines at times. The buttonholer gets "seven farthings" for each waistcoat, whether the holes are as few as three or as many as seven. Mr. P. told us that she provides twist, but we think that she uses some imitation of silk rather than real silk. Mrs. P. fells in the linings; who machines the pockets we did not learn. The rent of the work-room is 6*s.* For one of the two machines, Mr. P. is paying 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; the other is his own. His gas he estimates at 3*s.* He has had to provide the usual furniture and appliances and he furnishes

\* The slit for pockets is never, in our observation, cut beforehand; this remains for the worker to do. No doubt there would be a risk of stretching or fraying.



sewing cotton. It costs 2*d.* in fares to go to one employer and 4*d.* to go to the other. For some waistcoats Mr. P. is paid 1*s.* each, for some 1*s.* 3*d.* and for some 1*s.* 6*d.* Pockets are not paid extra. Those at 1*s.* 3*d.* we saw, and saw also the paper stating their price; they were cloth waistcoats to measure, of a fairly good appearance. We also saw a knitted waistcoat which was to be made up, as is customary, with a border—a sort of frame—of cloth to match and with bindings of cloth to its pockets. The price for making this is 1*s.* 6*d.* (We have a case of a West-end woman who gets 6*s.* 6*d.* for making a knitted waistcoat.) Mr. P. was formerly an indoor worker receiving £2 10*s.* a week, but was discharged after a strike. He says that when he was first at work the waistcoats for which he now receives 1*s.* were paid at 1*s.* 6*d.* each; he also says (and we are disposed to think this statement not very far from the truth) that, at a shilling each he barely makes a profit of a half-penny on each waistcoat. He thinks that with all hands working hard for long hours he could turn out a hundred waistcoats a week. He does not say that he ever has turned out so many. He and his wife were sad, civil people, evidently really poor and not remarkably clean. Mrs. P., who helps her husband in order to reduce expenses, said to us that as she sat sewing, away from her home, she was constantly wondering whether her young children were getting run over—a danger more present than ever to East-end mothers since the advent of the motor omnibus.



But it must not be supposed that the East-end worker is always worse paid than the West-end one. Mr. and Mrs. Q., who make coats of various sorts and who inhabit a fine old house, pay their four women workers a time wage of 3*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 9*d.*, and 4*s.* daily, and there is but little slack time in the year. These girls are quite certainly better off than many of the girls working in and around Soho.

Finally we may cite the case of a retail tailor, who being a person of unusually communicative disposition, gave to one of our little group a few details of the sort usually most difficult to obtain. This man has a tailor's shop in a rather poor part of London and displays in it suits at 30*s.*, trousers at 10*s.* 6*d.*, and ladies' long coats of "rather poor tweed material." He cuts out his own goods and gives them out to be made. For the making of trousers that retail at 10*s.* 6*d.* he pays 1*s.* 9*d.*, and reckons that of this the middleman gets 6*d.*, the underworkers and expenses accounting for 1*s.* 3*d.* Women, as usual, are employed in finishing and buttonholing. For making the lady's coat, retail price 25*s.* he says that he pays 5*s.* (but we have not documentary evidence for this statement as for the other), and was understood to say that his own profit on the coat was from 5*s.* to 7*s.* His rent, for a lock-up shop, was, he said, £75 a year exclusive of rates and taxes, a figure that strikes us as rather improbably high for the situation.

Viewing bespoke tailoring for men as a whole we see one superior branch in which handwork is almost universal, the provinces of men and women

pretty clearly distinguished, and the rate of payment high. We see this rate, however, gravely diminished by long periods of unemployment or of only partial employment, and by very exorbitant rents. In the case of the middleman or middlewoman—and the homeworking tailor partakes extremely often of the character of a middleman on a small scale—the expenses of rent, firing, tools and materials must often, in all but the busiest times, exceed the takings, and in time of prolonged slackness must involve serious weekly loss. We are of opinion that the West-end coat makers, men and women of high skill, producing the very best coats that can be made, do not, when all expenses are deducted, receive a wage that renders possible any provision for old age and that renders the bringing up of a family a most difficult achievement. The waistcoat maker is on the whole better off. She may reasonably look to making an average weekly wage of 25s. and that figure is reckoned among women workers as a high one.

Below this highest level of hand-made work we find a gradual descent in pay, mitigated on the upper range by the greater rapidity of machine work and by a diminution of slack time. It is probable that fairly good City work is in practice quite as remunerative to those engaged upon it as West-end work is. But workers of this class are always face to face with the danger of lowered rates. Organisation is not strong among them and most of the older workers remember higher rates prevailing for their present work. As we move farther from the West

towards the East-end and towards outlying districts we find clothes for single customers made at lower and lower rates until the difference between payment for bespoke work and payment for wholesale work becomes imperceptible.



## CHAPTER II

### WHOLESALE TAILORING. MEN'S CLOTHES

M. Albert Aftalion, in his admirable report upon the clothing trades in France, points out that the natural province of factory work is the large central division of any trade, while home work tends to prevail in the uppermost and lowermost strata. Expensive objects, of which no two are precisely alike must be, to a certain extent, the work of individuals; and individualism in labour is more compatible with home work than with factory work. Factory work is, as we can all see, most naturally adapted for the production of many objects of the same kind; in other words, for production by the dozen or the gross. As we have seen, in the foregoing chapter, the West-end bespoke tailoring trade, in which workers are paid by the coat or the waistcoat, is, in the main, a home industry; the wholesale tailoring trade with which we propose to deal next, is largely a factory industry. Largely, but not wholly. Certain operations, of which trouser finishing is the most conspicuous instance, demanding but little skill and no expensive appliances are frequently handed over to home workers and will probably continue to be so, as long as a supply of





cheap outside labour is ready to hand. Here we find exemplified the occurrence, noted by M. Aftalion, of home work on the lowest level of the industry. Such home work, he truly tells us, exists largely because of its evils: because the employer need not know where nor in what circumstances of hardship his goods are made, and because extreme stress of poverty will drive women to the acceptance of a wholly inadequate pittance. In the majority of cases the economy to the employer is so considerable that even if he paid half as much again as he now pays—possibly even if he paid twice as much—he would still find it worth his while to put out this work. The saving upon factory rent, upkeep and superintendence appear to be larger factors in the cheapness of home work than the lowness of wages, and these factors would not be disturbed by a rise in wages. It seems therefore a mistake to suppose that the establishment of a minimum wage *for both in-workers and out-workers* would necessarily or even probably displace out-workers. The same reasons which cause the out-worker to be preferred now would still be operative and the balance of advantages would not be altered. Of course no Board would be so fatuous as to fix the same piece-work prices for goods made by power machines as for goods made by hand. To do that would be to turn out the power machinists and to disturb the whole development of the trade. The aim of the Board would be to secure for each group of workers the same rate of payment for an hour's work or as nearly the same rate as would keep the balance

of advantages even. On the other hand to impose a minimum wage in the case of out-workers only would pretty certainly incline many employers to cease from employing them. It must be remembered that some employers already prefer to have trouser finishing and similar operations performed in their factories, and that few, if any, of the processes generally entrusted to home workers are not already, in some instances, performed in factories. That clear line of demarcation which exists between home work and factory work, as conceived by theorists not personally acquainted with the various trades, can seldom be observed in real life.

Nor is it easy, indeed, to draw clear dividing lines between any of the sections of the London tailoring trade. Not only does "the bespoke" merge into "the wholesale" but of late years the wholesale dealer has begun to manufacture single garments to measure, such work being known in the factory as "order work" or "special orders."\* In the manufacture of clothes for women this system has already reached a very considerable development; and appears to be growing in that of clothes for men. Moreover, while, on the part of the worker, there is a marked tendency towards specialisation, the factory shows an opposite tendency towards agglomeration.

\* An interesting example of the way in which "special orders" are sometimes carried out has just come to our knowledge. A certain tailor whose shop is full of ready-made goods undertakes to sell trousers to customers' own measures. The customer is duly measured; but no garment is specially cut for him. A pair, or the nearest larger stock size, is cut down to the right length of leg and is sent out to be hemmed up by a home-worker, who receives 4d. for the job.

We have visited, for instance, a most interesting establishment where we saw garments for men, for women and for children, covering almost the whole range of outer clothing. There were fur-lined motor coats, costing many guineas ; there were also little serge jackets suitable for elementary school children, and costing but a few shillings. There were coats and skirts for women of which the retail price might range from 21s. to 30s.; there were also silk-lined dresses of the most fashionable description, made to measure for, if memory serves, a wedding order. The area from which custom was drawn appeared to be very wide. We were told that goods from this firm travelled all over the British Empire and that at least one expensive "special order" was for Germany. All the rooms were light and well-appointed ; there was a good-sized meal room and a staircase for the women workers separate from that for the men ; the whole place was clean, and the workers, nearly all of whom were comfortably clothed, look well-mannered. We did not see wage books ; but people who have worked with the firm speak well of it and declare that it compares favourably with its rivals.

Very wide is the gap between a great establishment of this kind and the abode in which some woman sits "finishing" trousers in her poor single room ; but across this gap the intervening gradations are so fine as to be almost imperceptible. Some factories confine themselves to one kind of garment ; there are firms that turn out hundreds of



pairs of trousers or hundreds of waistcoats in a week ; others have several distinct departments, but do not produce clothes for women and children. Some factories are equipped with the latest and most complicated machinery, and the throb of the power machines pulsates through the whole building, but workshops still continue to exist in which treadle machines only are used. In some, division of labour has been carried to a very high point ; in others, the system is hardly more developed than in the West-end bespoke trade. Of all these kinds we have examples ; and we find the most curious variations of payment between firms producing apparently just the same kind of goods.

The lowest rates of pay seems to occur as a rule in connection with garments made under contract for institutions of some kind. Our information about work of this class is not very extensive, but, as far as it goes, it does incline us to believe that the system of tender and contract does often encourage the pressing down of wages to a level even lower than that which prevails in the ordinary course of trade. On the other hand we find cheering instances in which the provisions made by the London County Council to secure the payment of adequate wages to persons employed under the Council's contracts do in fact cause such workers to be paid at a higher rate for Council work than for other work.

Of workers engaged on work for various public services we have not many cases ; two of them which present points of interest are worth quoting.

Mrs. K. before marriage worked for one of the

best contractors and often earned 17s. or 18s. a week. She now works indoors for another employer, chiefly on workhouse orders, finishing what are known as "frocks" for officials. She bastes, braids, and in fact does everything but machining and pressing. Sometimes, but not often, she does the commoner work. She receives 5s. or 6s. 6d. for a frock, and can do one in one and a half to two days. Fares cost her 3d. daily. Her husband has not regular work and there are three children, whom she leaves at a crèche. She works up to the birth of her children and returns to the factory four weeks afterwards. In the busy season she may earn from 14s. to 20s. a week. She was visited in the summer and her receipts for the previous weeks had been 19s. 10d., 15s. 6d., 14s. 3d., but as there is much slack time the average through the year would be lower. Of a certain prison order the rates of pay were so bad (2s. 1d. for basting and finishing "frocks") that the women refused to do more of it than making samples and the firm will, she declares, give the work out "to the Jews."

Mrs. J. whose wage-book (May 1908) showed an average of 6s. 10½d. over eleven weeks, has worked at home for many years for a middlewoman, and makes various garments of materials other than cloth: boy's cricketing knickerbockers in flannel; khaki linen suits; men's trousers in drill and flannel; football knickerbockers, alpaca coats and khaki trousers. For the boys' flannel knickerbockers she gets 1¼d. per pair and takes half an hour to make a pair; for men's drill trousers (one and a half

hours) 4*d.* ; for alpaca coats 4½*d.* each ; for khaki trousers 1*s.* 9*d.* a dozen. She provides machine (1*s.* 6*d.* a week) and cotton 2¼*d.* a reel, for drill ; 3*d.* a reel, for khaki ; one reel makes a dozen pairs. Four years ago the boys' garments for which she now gets 1*s.* 3*d.* a dozen were paid at 2*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. The khaki trousers at 1*s.* 9*d.* paid so badly that the women complained and the middlewoman refused to take any more such work. Although khaki garments evidently belong to uniforms of some sort, we must not hastily assume that these were necessarily destined for the limbs of the British Army. We may, however, pretty safely assume that they were made under contract. Khaki, it may be remarked, is an unpleasant material to work and apt to break needles.

Rates of payment in tailoring factories vary very widely. We have for instance the cases of two girls employed as pressers who live within walking distance of each other and were interviewed in the course of the same month by the same investigator. One of these presses all parts of men's suits and is paid 6*d.*, 9*d.* or 1*s.* a dozen for trousers, 6*d.* to 9*d.* for waistcoats and 2*d.* to 2½*d.* each for coats. The trousers and waistcoats take her about ten minutes per garment. This young woman says that she cannot work, as she formerly did, where gas irons are used : the fumes make her feel faint and ill. Like all pressers, she looks anæmic, although she has the advantage of going home to meals and although her present place of work is in an airy and healthy situation. She says that to earn 16*s.* a



week at pressing is good pay and that when time-wages are given, 12s. is the usual rate. The other girl, however, who presses trousers only and whose work is regular is paid only 7s. a week. She works in the same room with two young men pressers and is of opinion that she presses a pair of trousers quite as well as they do. She does not know their wages but feels sure that they are not getting less than 18s. She began work at 2s. 6d. in this factory, four years ago and has risen by degrees, but had, to use her own phrase, "a lot of trouble" to get her last rise of 1s. a week. She and her parents are, justly, much dissatisfied with her present wage, and are also displeased that the employer has not kept a promise that she should learn machining. That a young girl should spend four years of her life wielding heavy pressing irons in a hot, ill-ventilated room, and attain at the end no higher payment than 7s. a week, seems indeed a cruel state of things.

The following case of a coat hand exemplifies both the difference of payments in different firms and some common causes for complaint. This young woman, who with her brother helps to keep a widowed mother and young sister, is engaged in machining the fronts and lapels of all kinds of men's coats, only one other worker in the factory also doing this work. She is paid  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. or 1d. per coat and can do about three in an hour. She has to provide "trimmings" and in the week before that in which the investigator saw her had paid 2s. 9d. for trimmings out of a total of 21s. 5d. In the

factory where she learned her trade, and of which she speaks well, she "took coats through," *i.e.*, she made them completely and was paid from 4s. to 5s. per coat. At her present place most workers, she says, are very poorly paid, and there is, besides, much slack time. Moreover there is no meal-room. The girls either eat their food on the machines or go out. The door, which is open from 1 to 1.20, is closed after that until 2 o'clock, so that the girls are debarred from going out for a few minutes after finishing their meal. No time is allowed for tea, though the hours are from 8 to 7.

A hard case is that of Miss L. who works in a factory as a waistcoat finisher, part of her work being to make buttonholes by machine. She has been two years in her present place and though she has asked several times for an increase of her present wage—6s. 6d. a week—cannot obtain it. The employer tells her that if she is not content she can go. The girls here, she says, are always coming and going, and she herself is looking out for better paid work. The family circumstances are hard, the father with help of a child, only earning enough to pay the rent—6s. 6d. a week—and the mother going out to work when she can get any. Some home-working waistcoat hands are far better paid than this indoor worker. From workers in other departments of this factory, we have similar accounts.

Of workshops we may cite two sharply contrasted examples, both situated in a quiet square, and both occupying good old houses of a type still common

in East-end districts—houses that were once doubtless the dwellings of well-to-do merchants and were surrounded, in all probability, by agreeable gardens, with fruit-trees and old-fashioned flower-beds.

Mr. and Mrs. F. make coats of all sorts, including overcoats. Of the eight women employed two are buttonholers, and the rest put in linings. All looked prosperous and respectable, and all were well dressed. The work-room, built upon what had been the garden, was large, clean and airy, well lighted by windows high up, and heated, quite adequately, by a gas stove. Mrs. F. told us that work was fairly continuous throughout the year. The hours of the women are from 8 to 8, and they do not work on Saturdays nor on Sundays. They are paid by the day, their rates being 3s. 6d., 3s. 9d. and 4s. We did not learn how many were of each grade: 17s. 6d. however, as the lowest wage for five days' work, with very little slack time, represents, for an East-end worker, something like opulence, and many persons acquainted with both branches will think the position of these young women better than that of a West-end worker, who, earning nominally 5s. a day, is liable to receive, in fact, no more than half that amount during six months of the twelve. It will be remarked that these well-paying employers are Jewish, a fact worth noting in view of the frequency with which Gentile rivals attribute to Hebrew competition "the ruin of the trade" and the prevalence of starvation wages.

Across the square lives the G. family. As we approached the house we saw on the steps a young



woman who had in her arms a baby and was talking to an older woman standing on the pavement. Both were poorly clad and the younger in particular looked pale and anxious. She proved to be Mrs. G. and was ready to give us information though not to ask us in. They were short of work, she said, and times were hard. They make trousers ; Mr. G. cuts out from material supplied ; women machine and finish and men press, all on the premises. Mr. G. receives 1s. 9d. or 2s. a pair, out of which sum he pays to a woman 1s. for the entire making and to a man 6d. for pressing. The latter figures were confirmed by the second woman, who said that she had made trousers in the G. workshop. Rent for the whole house (of six or seven rooms) was, Mrs. G. told us, 24s. weekly. Some members of her husband's family lodged with them. She added, quite truly, we believe, that the profits, all deductions made, do not exceed 2d. or 3d. a pair ; and indeed her own appearance was that of a person pinched by poverty. She was a civil-spoken, well-mannered woman, not voluble, but apparently rather pleased to find interested listeners. As we stood before the old house, so different in its air of indigence from that which we had just quitted on the other side of the square, a picture flitted before us of the family life that it sheltered and of the struggle to clothe and feed man, wife and children from the proceeds of trousers manufactured at a profit of, say,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pair. Clearly enough this middleman answered but very remotely to the popular conception of the prosperous

“sweater.” Taking the figures given us (and they are confirmed by other cases) we cannot feel that Mr. G. is dealing ungenerously with his employees. It would be interesting to know what are the profits per pair of the firm for which he is working. But of that firm we did not learn even the name.

As a matter of theory one would expect to find the small workshop failing, in all cases, to hold its own against the well-fitted factory; but though many workshops afford only a wretched and precarious subsistence, not a few others seem to prosper very comfortably. How many workshops in the various poorer districts of London are engaged in tailoring on a small scale we cannot even conjecture. In the East-end alone there are streets in which the rattle of the machine may be heard from nearly every house; and sites that eighty or one hundred years ago bore kitchen gardens or orchards are now covered with buildings of several storeys, each apartment of which is a separate workroom let at several shillings a week. Some of these—like that described in a previous chapter—are devoted to the “bespoke” trade, some to tailoring by the dozen or gross, and some, of course, though not a very large proportion, to other trades altogether.

In the closing hours of the afternoon, especially on Fridays, certain thoroughfares are populated by women, girls and boys, with a sprinkling of men, all carrying bundles. Some of these are either home workers or representatives of home workers, but others are the messengers of middlemen, and

the men are almost always the masters of small workshops. On pay-day, even if not on other days, the middleman prefers to "go to shop" himself. He is generally not anxious that any employee shall become acquainted with the precise total of his takings.

Our cases of workshop employment show considerable variety of earnings often for very similar work.

Case No. 158 is that of a young woman who lives with her parents. Her father's trade is extremely irregular, and she gives all her earnings to her mother who feeds and clothes her. She has been at work two years and is still young. She works for a middleman whose hours are from 8.30 to 8 with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours for meals. There is little overtime but much slack time. Her work is trouser-basting and finishing ; she lines, makes six buttonholes and hems up the feet, all by hand. For order trousers she is paid 1s. a pair, for stock trousers 10d., and for breeches, which have three or four more buttonholes, 1s. 6d. She reckons she can make  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pairs in a day and thinks her average weekly wage is about 7s. to 8s. ; 10s. she considers to be "a good week" and 5s. a bad one. She thinks, however, that a really quick hand might make 15s. a week during the season.

Mrs. C., a more experienced hand, employed by a middleman and engaged principally on order work, does practically the same work and receives 1s. a pair. She says that it takes her four hours hard work to do one pair, so that when busy she



can by hard work earn 3*d.* an hour. To her, as to the last worker, all materials are supplied. This woman is a widow supporting herself and two children. At the best she earns only 14*s.* a week, and in the slack seasons sometimes not more than 2*s.* When young she did good waistcoat work and earned 17*s.* to 20*s.* a week. The rent of her single room is 4*s.* and during the winter she falls into debt for this and for the necessaries of life, endeavouring to pay up her arrears during the comparatively prosperous period when she had as much as 14*s.* a week to deal with. A clergyman offered to get one of her children into a school but she refused, because the child was delicate. Hitherto she has struggled on without Poor Law relief, but fears that she will be compelled to seek it. When she does, she will in all probability be parted from her children.

Mrs. D. is a young married woman whose husband has been much out of work, having been unemployed, indeed, for four months during 1907. During that time the home was kept going by her earnings. She is a skilled superior woman who learned her trade thoroughly. Her work is similar to that of Mrs. C. and of No. 158, but she is paid at a higher rate, her work bringing in 1*s.*, 1*s.* 6*d.*, and 1*s.* 9*d.* a pair. She can do a pair in less than three hours and in the busy season often makes over 20*s.* a week, although she does not go in to work until after 9 in the morning. She comes home for meals. From August till about March, work is slack, but even in slack times she has one

or two pairs of trousers to make in a day. Her house is well kept, the younger of her two children is left in good hands while she is at work, she speaks well of her employer and seems happy and cheerful. But there is a darker side to the story. In seven years she has had six children of whom three have been born dead—the last of these three only three weeks before the investigator's visit. Thus two only of the six children are living ; and one cannot but wonder whether the mother's work at the machine may not have contributed to the three still births.

In a different district of London lives Mrs. E., who before her marriage worked indoors and after her marriage out of doors for a local employer. She also basted and finished trousers, she also was paid 1s. a pair, and when she worked indoors she could do three pairs in a day. In the workshop all materials were provided, but when she worked at home she had to supply the thread and cotton. She did not find that working at home really paid her, because each pair of trousers had, after being basted, to be taken to the "shop" in order to be machined, home again for part of the finishing, to the shop again for pressing, and once more home for final work. Though she used to have two or three pairs at once a good deal of time was wasted. Her husband having constant work in a skilled and well-paid trade, she gave up work on the birth of her second child and now devotes her time to her small children and her home which she keeps clean and comfortable.

Miss F., a young girl living with her family in fairly comfortable conditions, is a machinist of trousers in a workshop and is paid at the following rates: boys' trousers 2*s.* 3*d.* a dozen; men's (stock) 2*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 9*d.*; men's (best work or special) 3*s.* One pair of men's trousers takes about three-quarters of an hour to make. She believes that her employer (a middleman in a small way) receives about 10*d.* for a pair of stock trousers, and about 1*s.* for order work. He has of course to pay for finishing and pressing as well as for machining. The largest sum she has ever received is 13*s.* 6*d.*

Another young woman makes waistcoats on the premises of her employer, a middleman, and her conditions of work are in some respects similar to those of the West-end trade. She does hand-work only, but apparently does not do quite all the work of any waistcoat; probably pockets are machined. She is paid 3*s.* a day, the hours being from 8 to 8. In the busy season there is often overtime till 9.30 or 10 o'clock, and on such occasions she receives an extra 7*d.* On the other hand, for nearly half the year the workshop will be "on three-quarter or half time," so that her average wage does not, she thinks, exceed 9*s.* or 10*s.* a week. As she has worked six years for this employer and is his best hand, she thinks she ought to get 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* a day.

Much waistcoat making and the greater amount of trouser finishing is done by women working at home, some being fairly well paid and some paid at rates which, quite literally, only just keep them from starvation. Examples of considerable varia-



tions will be found in the tabulated cases, but of course no really valid comparison of payments can be made without a comparison of the actual work done, but it is at least pretty clear that uniformity or even approximate uniformity does not prevail. We find one woman who finishes trousers at home at 5*d.* a pair, and says she does a pair in an hour and a half; another, although she receives 1*s.* a pair, makes far less money, because like the woman mentioned above, under the name of Mrs. E., she first bastes, then takes the article to be machined in the factory, fetches it back for the next process, and then returns it to the shop for pressing and after that completes the finishing at home. She sews in pockets, puts lining in seat and at the top, turns up the feet, sews on the buttons and makes buttonholes, providing thread and cotton. She cannot, sitting close, do more than one pair in six or seven hours, considering that she has to take each pair twice to the shop. Such ruthless waste of a worker's time is a not very uncommon feature of home-work.

We find that in Case 97, a woman machines trousers, presses the tops and puts in pockets at rates varying from 2½*d.* per pair, *i.e.*, 2*s.* 3*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* 9*d.* per dozen. She reports that she can do from six to eight pairs in ten hours. She has to provide thread, cotton (4*d.* worth suffices for about 16 pairs) machine (1*s.* 6*d.* per week), fire for heating irons, and flour "for pressing." This last item will seem mysterious to persons who do not know that, in cheap work, linings are applied with paste. This worker's husband is employed by

the firm for which she works and is paid 20s. a week. Their rent is 6s. and they have four children. She is glad to work for ten or twelve hours if she can get the work to do, for, as she truly remarks, "20s. doesn't go very far with so many to care for." The home and children seem neglected—how could it be otherwise?—yet her exertions add but little to the family income. Much more work, she says, has now to be done in a dozen pairs at 2s. 6d., than was formerly the case and, during the past four years, work has been slack so that she never makes more than 6s. or 7s. in a week and sometimes has only a single dozen to do in a week. The employer, it will be observed, commands the labour of two adults for the sum of about 26s. 6d. a week.

With this case may be compared No. 385, a mother and two daughters working together and supporting themselves entirely. The mother has worked over thirty years for one employer. They machine and finish trousers, but do not press nor shrink them. The work, we believe, is of a somewhat higher quality than in Case 97. The rates paid are 9d., 10d., 11d. and 1s. They have their own machine (the fact that one machine suffices among the three workers shows that the finishing takes twice as long as the machining) and they provide "trimmings" which cost about  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  in every 1s. earned. In other words, every shilling of their nominal wage is really  $\frac{7}{8}$  of 1s. They work as they say "factory hours," probably about ten hours a day, and their average takings are 30s. among the

three, or 10s. each. The deduction of "trimmings" would reduce the total 30s. by 3s. 9d., or each 10s. by 1s. 3d. They rent a house at 15s. 6d., and lodgers pay them 8s. 6d. They are quick workers and when their employer has work they are sure of getting it and are generally fairly busy: but during part of 1907 and 1908 work was very slack and they had a hard struggle. At one time they tried working for "a private firm" (probably bespoke work) and were paid 1s. 9d., or 2s. per pair. But—and we would ask attention to this point—they had to shrink and press, and are of opinion that their present work really pays better. Thus we see how little trustworthy is a mere comparison of piece-work rates when we do not know precisely the amount of work done in each case. The only really satisfactory method of estimating payments is by the amount that can be earned in an hour.

An interesting case is that of Mrs. G., a young married woman who was an indoor hand before marriage, working for a firm which has the reputation of being a bad paymaster. At the end of three months' training she was able to earn at piece-work over 13s. a week, and was paid 1s. 2d. to 1s. 4d. basting and finishing a pair of trousers, without buttonholes. She now works at home for a middleman who supplies her old employers and finishes, still without buttonholes, but apparently does not baste, at 6d. per pair, each pair taking about an hour. Indoor hands, she says, get 6d. for finishing and 6d. for basting, that is, 1s. a pair. Whether the indoor



hands provide "trimmings" we did not learn. She has to buy cotton and soap for pressing, and to provide irons and fire. Her husband is in steady work at 24s. a week and they have two children. They pay 5s. for a flat in an uninviting block and in a street by no means agreeable, but the interior of the home is clean and pleasant.

In waistcoat making, again, we find considerable diversity, both of conditions and of payment. Mrs. W. is a home worker, a capable and intelligent woman, a widow supporting herself and child; she receives 2s. 6d. per waistcoat (probably bespoke work) and refuses to take less, but has been offered 1s. 6d., 1s. 4d., and as little as 10d. for similar garments, and knows that an employer close to her home gives out waistcoats at 10d., 1s. and 1s. 3d. each, with no extra payment for pockets. These lower prices are probably wholesale, but payment for bespoke work of the cheaper kind tends to assimilate to that for wholesale work. Mrs. W. says that it is increasingly difficult to get work at her price and that if her present employer were to die or to retire she does not know where she could get the same rate of pay. She has worked since she was a girl, always at about the same rate, but adds that cotton and silk (which she now provides) have both grown dearer and now cost 1d. to 1½d. per waistcoat. She also provides machine, iron and fire for pressing. She can make three waistcoats in two days by working hard, but there are long slack times when she has not so many to do.

In one of those long thoroughfares that begin by

being almost in Bethnal Green and end—often after two or three changes of name—by being almost in Stoke Newington, there dwells a double household, one half of which consists of Mrs. U., a widow, and her small child. On a separate floor live her unmarried sister and mentally deficient brother. Both sisters are home workers and the brother, who is dependent upon them, takes to and fro their work. Mrs. U. machines waistcoats, not making the buttonholes nor pressing. She is paid 6*d.* each for comparatively plain ones, and 1*s.* each for those that are double stitched and have flap pockets. Of the 6*d.* ones she can make one in an hour, and supports herself and her child in something like comfort. She pays 8*s.* for rent and finds it worth her while to pay 4*s.* a week to a girl who does her house-work. Mrs. U. has worked for more than twenty years at this trade and makes on an average 22*s.* or 23*s.* a week. She gets work from two different employers, both of whom apparently pay her the same rates, and says that prices have not altered much. She adds, however, that when her two employers have not had much work to give her she has sometimes tried elsewhere but found the prices so bad that she would not take the work. 5*d.* or 4½*d.* is offered for the work for which she gets 6*d.* Her unmarried sister also makes waistcoats and employs two or three girls, one of whom has been with her for several years and earns at least 20*s.* a week.

These are comparatively bright pictures. Let us look at a case of a different sort. In one of those many courts whose external hopelessness is mocked

by a name of the "Mount Pleasant" or "Paradise" order, lives the family of a casual dock labourer who, owing chiefly to ill health, has done only four days' work in the course of as many months. There are six children of whom one was but two months old at the date of the investigator's visit. One child earned 6s. a week and another 4s. 6d.; upon these pittances and the earnings of the mother the family has to subsist and to scrape together 4s. a week for rent. She makes very cheap waistcoats for a "sweater," finishing them throughout with the exception of the buttonholes, which have to be machined, at her expense,—and at a cost of 1s. 6d. per hundred. The waistcoats are lined, and also interlined with canvas. She receives  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. for each and reports (which seems hardly credible) that she can do one in three-quarters of an hour. From her earnings must be deducted 1s. 6d. a week for hire of machine, and cotton at  $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. per reel, one reel being sufficient for a dozen waistcoats. This, of course, in addition to the payments to the buttonholer, which are considerable. In one week she made thirty waistcoats, and out of the 11s. 3d. thus earned paid 3s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to the buttonholer. Driven by extreme poverty and the hunger of her children she works long hours when she can get work enough, but often she has no work to do. The house is dirty and the husband told the visitor that for several days in that week bread had been their only food. Often she is kept waiting for parts of the work. She showed her visitor waistcoats partly made which could not be completed till she got linings for which she had



already waited two days. What a life is that of this poor woman and her husband, both pinched by privation and by ceaseless anxiety, she toiling, he fretted, not only by frequent acute pain, but also by his inability to work. And what a life is that of the six underfed children in that dirty house and squalid court !

It would be an error, however, to conclude that this woman's poverty is due to her being a home-worker. Quite probably the majority of her employer's eight or nine indoor workers do not earn more than she does. Indeed the case of Miss. L., quoted above, who is also a waistcoat finisher and who works in a factory at a weekly wage of 6s. 6d., represents a lower rate of pay. And these cases are by no means exceptional. It would be easy to collect scores of instances in which workers both indoor and outdoor never earn as much as 10s. a week. We have endeavoured to present, both in the text and in the tabulations, cases which we believe to be fairly typical. We would call attention to the low wages of several of the men in these families ; the work of women for low payments, especially their work at home is, we believe, intimately connected with the underpayment of men in many sorts of employment. We would also call attention to the number of instances in which it is mentioned that payments are lower than was formerly the case. In the course of this investigation we have seldom, if ever, met with an instance in which the payment for any particular kind of work has risen. On the whole it seems

impossible to doubt that competition between employers has reduced and is still reducing the share of the workers, and that the workers, owing to poverty, and to lack of organisation, are making no effectual resistance.

## CHAPTER III

### WOMEN'S TAILORING AND COSTUMES

THE great characteristic of women's clothing in our own day has been the development of the ready-made garment. Mantles and coats have long been "stock" articles; the "coat and skirt" is of more recent growth; and the "costume" of later date still. There are now firms (chiefly in the country) which do a large trade entirely by post; and some of these will make to measure. One firm, indeed, producing quite cheap goods, advertises dresses to measure only. These particular firms lie outside our field, but their productions compete with those of London workers and doubtless their rates of pay affect the Londoner's wage.

The trade known as "ladies' tailoring" has, like men's tailoring, a high-class and expensive branch in which every garment is individual. This trade is, to a greater extent than is the case with men's tailoring, carried on upon the premises of the employer. Many good shops have their own skirt room. Some employers, however, put out all their work, either to small workshops or to home-workers. We have seen men, with some female relative to help them, making ladies' coats of the best quality



at home, the divisions of work being practically the same as in men's coats and the piece-work payments apparently large, but reduced by various expenses. Sometimes such men succeed in keeping a separate room for work, sometimes it is done in the living room. Again, ladies' coats, even of a high class, are made in workshops, most of the work being done, with more or less subdivision, by women.

We have the cases of three different girls who work in one of the smartest houses in London. One of these is sixteen and began, a year ago, as a "trötter." In that function she wore out three pairs of boots, the cost of which must have largely or perhaps wholly nullified her earnings. She now works in the skirt room, where fifty hands are employed. Wages, she says, are decided by the fitter. Hers are 4*s.* 6*d.* a week. There is a good deal of slack time, and as her father is an invalid, one would think she badly needed more money, but she is cheerful and speaks well of the fitter. Her friend of about the same age who also makes skirts but not in the same room has the same wage and suffers from even more slack time. This girl has a widowed mother and a sister hopelessly invalided. She complains that in busy seasons the fitter calls them from their dinner to go on with work and sometimes reduces their three-quarters of an hour to twenty minutes. They have of course, a legal right to half an hour. The third worker was apprenticed at this house and at the end of nearly three years was only receiving 8*s.* a week. She then left and went to work for a relative. She, unlike the other

two, says that work was pretty regular, but that there was some three-quarter time.

A worker in another firm of the same standing is more advanced. She "takes her own skirts direct from the fitter," *i.e.*, is a fully competent skirt hand. Yet her wage, three months after reaching this stage, was only 16s. weekly. She was, however, expecting a rise of 3s. Her custom is to give her mother 10s. a week "whatever happens" out of which sum her mother lodges and feeds her: and to keep the balance for herself. Work here is on the whole very regular and the work-place (we have seen it) excellent in the matters of air, light and space. The food of the workers is heated free of charge, and tea and bread and butter are given, but these are not considered good by the girls and they prefer to buy it themselves.

The quality of the tea given in some work-rooms is a point about which workers feel deeply. One very nice woman still recalls with satisfaction the super-excellence of the bread and butter provided by a firm for which she worked a short time many years ago.

A home-worker who makes skirts for a West-end shop was, when we saw her, engaged upon a skirt trimmed with wide braid, sewn on in a pattern. She machines all seams, tacks and machines the trimming, and finishes: *i.e.*, puts on waist-band and hooks and eyes, and hems in lining, if any. For this skirt she would get 12s. 6d. A plain serge skirt which we saw would be 8s. 6d., and a lined serge skirt 11s. She had made, for 12s., a seven-

seamed skirt, forty-five inches long, which had four rows of stitching at each seam and twelve rows at the foot. The skirt was four yards round, so that there was about eighty-three yards of machine-stitching to do, apart from finishing. Moreover the eighty-three yards of sewing silk comes out of the worker's pocket. Each skirt has to go in to be fitted. If one is brought unfinished in some trifling point—a hook short for example—it is completed by some indoor hand and a charge of 2s. is made to the outworker. This is called payment for the missing work, but the scale of pay is many times higher than hers. If she fails to take back a skirt in time for the customer a messenger comes for it in a cab and she is charged 1s. 6d. for the fare. In the week previous to our visit she had done work for which she reckoned to receive £1, but deductions—she did not quite know what for—reduced the amount to 17s. As some ladies are fitted three times, and she must take the skirt in for each fitting, she may lose a good deal of time. She is also kept waiting an hour or more to be paid. Particulars of her work are not given her beforehand (as by law they should be).<sup>\*</sup> If she had known that she would receive only 12s. for the skirt with the eighty-three yards of stitching, she says she would not have taken it to do.

Coming to the next grade (large, well-known shops in good positions) we find a capable young woman who makes alterations in coats and skirts and

<sup>\*</sup> We have a large number of cases in which the "particulars clause" is not observed.



sometimes makes new models, receiving 18s. a week. As much as three months in the year is slack time. She is one of a family of three, one earning 16s. (at a less distinguished shop) and one (probably still young) 15s. Their rent, for three rooms is 8s. This worker was discharged without notice by a previous employer because she answered truly a factory inspector's question about overtime. She sued the employer for a week's pay and recovered the money, but was three months without work afterwards. That useful association the Industrial Law Committee helped her.\* At her present work-place the indoor hands often work very late, but the work-room being at the back and the whole front of the house dark, the inspector has not yet discovered them. This overtime is due to the fitter's unwillingness to take on the extra "season hands" who are needed, and the fitter is unwilling to pay wages to more people because to do so would diminish the profit shown upon her room. Our informant says that no worker dares look at the copy of the Factory Act displayed in the work-room for the address of the inspector for fear of being suspected if the inspector came.

Two sisters of eighteen and twenty-one work together in the work-room of a well-known shop. The elder has 18s., the younger 7s. weekly. They work from 8.45 to 7.30 and if there is overtime are paid for it at 6d. an hour. They live together in

\* This Committee has an Indemnity Fund out of which it gives money-help to workers who get discharged in such ways as this.

one room, paying 4s. 6d. for it, keep it beautifully and are very comfortable on their joint income of 25s. a week. Another girl in the same shop earns 19s. weekly and makes coats and skirts. This firm—in which hands seem to remain for many years—tries to equalise the hardness of slack times by making each worker in rotation take three days away from work.

In other shops of good standing—some very expensive—we find a first skirt hand at 22s.; a skirt hand (in a far less smart shop) who rose to 20s. after working only a short time; another at 16s.; an assistant skirt hand at 13s., after four years' work for present employer; another, after four years, at 9s. (a very smart place) and suffering from long slack time; another, who has been at work two and a half years and is now at a very fashionable shop, 9s.; another, at a tailor's in a less expensive neighbourhood, 9s. after four and a half years' work in the same place. Some of these workers speak well of their places of employment; some are thoroughly uncomfortable. Comfort or discomfort evidently depends very largely upon the forewoman or fitter at the head of each room.

We have met few cases of mantles made for retail shops; and indeed outdoor coats of all kinds tend to be made wholesale. Among our few cases of workers for retail two are those of women who formerly worked for a firm now extinct, and regretted by workers and customers alike. One an old woman, now past work, used to "finish" mantles. For elaborate jet-trimmed mantles such

as were fashionable thirty years ago she was paid 7s. and took two days over the work. Before she left (the establishment meanwhile having changed hands) she had but 5s. for similar work taking two days. She went to a large wholesale firm, was paid 18s. weekly, and remained there until she became too old.

Mr. H., a Jew, living in a good house in the East-end, makes skirts and costumes for West-end shops, employing his daughter—a most capable young woman—as a finisher, and in busy seasons employing extra hands. She told us that she can finish two coats (at  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  each) in an hour. For finishing a costume she gets 6d. and this she considers a much lower rate. Tailoring, she assures us, is “no trade for a woman” although better than blouse-making (which she seems to have tried). She herself can earn 21s. a week in busy seasons and never at the slackest falls beneath 6s.

The wholesale trade has one branch in the upper walks of which a small number of women are said to be well paid for really interesting work. This is the branch (when it is a separate one) of designing. In a good many establishments the employer designs and plans; in some, a woman devotes all her time to such work; in some, of smaller dimensions, it is in the hands of a fitter. Among home workers a certain number of clever women make designs of their own and take them to show to firms in the hope of getting an order to make so many dozen copies. In this way some employers get designs made free of charge. It is unfortunately not quite an unheard-of thing for the



pattern to be noted though the offer is declined, and for other workers to be subsequently employed upon what is practically a reproduction. It seems fairly clear that a certain number of low class manufacturers make a practice of copying other people's patterns—generally in cheaper materials—and that this practice is a considerable factor in that rapid vulgarisation of styles which, in its turn, helps to cause those speedier revolutions of fashion to which, in part, at least, the increasing irregularity of employment in the clothing trade is due.

The good designer has to keep in constant touch with the currents of fashion; the experienced observer may sometimes note a businesslike woman gazing anxiously with the eye rather of a student than of a customer, into West-end shop windows. She is seeking ideas and while she may be a private dressmaker or even one of those enterprising individualists, who still make their own clothes, she may quite probably be a designer collecting data for her work. If she is very eminent she will go twice a year to Paris. The great thing is to acquire familiarity with the general lines of the coming mode and to guess—some people have a kind of instinct in this direction—which of the many competing styles will as the phrase goes "catch on." Then the designer thinks out a scheme for a dress, a coat, a blouse or a dressing-gown as the case may be that will, as far as she can tell, cost about the sum allowed to her. She makes a sketch and cuts a pattern. The next, and a very important step, is the placing of the pattern upon

the material to be employed ; a whole day or even more may be spent in so fitting it in as to leave no large pieces over. Upon economy in cutting may depend the whole difference between profit and loss upon a gross of costumes at a certain price. The problem of the designer is to evolve the most attractive object possible within certain limits of expenditure. Sometimes she will be so successful that she will have, as an employer phrased it, "fourpence left to play with in trimmings." For the ability to invent a charming design in the prevailing fashion is not all that is required of a designer ; she must also be skilful in "costing," else her "creation" will be too expensive for the general public.

We have no first-hand information of the salary of a designer in a first-class house. We have heard rumours of £200 a year but have found no girl working up who expected ever to exceed £2 a week. One young woman of about twenty-three who designs and cuts costumes, skirts and blouses for a wholesale firm turning out West-end work, receives only 18s. a week. She thinks—justly—that she is paid too little and from various details she gives us, we believe the firm employing her to be systematically underpaying its workers.

The account of wholesale work on the whole is not very cheering. There are excellent firms that supply leading shops and that pay their workers pretty well. We have ourselves visited several such places. Messrs. Y., for example, have two places, one for showrooms and model-making, one

for the work made from the models. Coats are given out to tailors, all the rest of the work is done by women, a few of these being small middlewomen outside. A sleeve hand in the model room whom we have interviewed elsewhere was receiving 18s. weekly. In the factory there was a pleasant meal-room and good accommodation for workers. We did not obtain very definite information here as to wages. A forewoman tells us that a "good hand" should make £1 a week and over. The employer told us that they do not pay less than 4s. for the making of even the plainest of their blouses, whatever the material.

Another firm doing extremely pretty, but not quite such costly work, is run by an educated and very able woman, employing about forty to fifty hands. She says that "full hands" earn 20s. to 22s. but she leaves the engagement of workers and the terms to the head of each room. She herself designs, manages and cuts. No overtime is worked. She is convinced that it does not pay.

A great gulf divides such firms as these from one which we visited in the East-end. The workshop was a shed divided by a filthy yard from the house in front. Several men and five women were making all kinds of cheap coats for women, of three-quarter or full length. The women only finish, fell collars and fronts, sleeves and pockets. The buttons are put on by out-workers. The employer, a stout personage with a good deal of watch-chain, says that he pays 1½d. for finishing a coat, whatever the size, and that a woman could do three in an



hour. Both visitors think that it would be a quick woman who did two. They do not work on Saturdays, but on Sundays from 8 to 4. In slack seasons this man says he takes work from a cheaper firm and so keeps his hands all the time, though they earn less money. He thinks that his women make 15s. a week in full time, and not less than 12s. in slack; statements which we think doubtful. His is known in the neighbourhood by no other name than "the sweating shop" and the woman who directed us to it had a difficulty in recalling his name.

A young woman working for a wholesale employer in a large way of business gives us the figures of her piece-work earnings for several weeks as follows—5s., 25s., 8s., 18s., and says that she has taken as much as 30s. She is now engaged upon silk costumes. She tells us that copies of a sample are always paid at a lower rate than the original; thus 3s. 6d. might be paid for a sample, and 3s. each for the copies; while "repeat orders" for the same costume would be priced still lower.

A girl and her mother work at a City factory which produces goods of the better medium kind. The mother is a good sample hand, earning, according to her daughter "good money"; the girl is a machinist. For machining a plain full-length tweed coat, unlined, with straps over the shoulders and down the back, gauntlet cuffs, fly-front, bound seams and storm collar she receives 1s. For a tight-fitting long coat with strapped seams 1s. 6d. The former coat takes about two hours to do. The

latter about three. She has to provide cotton of the right colours at  $2\frac{1}{4}d.$  a reel. This seems to be one of the cases in which the industry of a wife and daughter lead to the inactivity of the husband. "I gathered," writes the investigator, "that the father did a job now and then but found life very comfortable on their earnings."

Another girl is a buttonhole machinist in this firm and is paid 16s. 6d. per week.

A man called L. has two workshops in a rather poor neighbourhood. In that which is reputed to do the cheapest work, Mrs. K. is employed. She machines three-quarter length Chesterfield-fronted coats of heavy cloth; each seam and the hem have two rows of stitching, there are two pockets, turn-over collars and revers; of these she can do three in a day. She is paid 6d. each. For light alpaca coats of full length, with gauntlet cuffs, a collar and two rows of stitching at the seams and hem, she receives  $5\frac{1}{2}d.$  and can do two and a half in a day. For heavy export coats, lined and strapped down the seams with four rows of stitching she is paid  $9\frac{1}{2}d.$  and can do two in a day. Owing to the thickness and stiffness of the material this is extremely hard work. For long Norfolk jackets, the straps of which must be stitched separately, 6d. each; can make two in a day. The forewoman measured these coats on a stand and obliged the worker to rip off several straps because they were about an eighth of an inch crooked. The lined coats have to be pressed in the course of making and the workers often have to wait for the presser; many women

will take an iron and press them themselves, but Mrs. K. is too short to be able to press. She is one of the few women we have met who says that she works for pocket money. No woman, she says, could live by this work. A skirt finisher in a firm close by is paid 10s. a week regularly, whereas Mrs. K. seldom, if ever, exceeds 7s. A worker in another factory machined costumes consisting of Norfolk jacket and skirt (unlined, but faced with linenette and stitched six times at foot) for 1s. 2d. The costume took two and a half to three hours to make. For plain skirts with four rows of stitching,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d., each takes 40 minutes to make; formerly, in the same factory 5d. was paid for plain skirts with less work in them than these, then  $4\frac{1}{4}$ d. Costumes range from 1s. to 5s. each; she has seen costumes for which as little as 10d. was paid. Not only do the workers here provide cotton, but have to pay  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in every 1s. for power.

A great deal of wholesale work is given out to home-workers, much of it at excessively low rates and occasionally at rates actually lower by the piece than those paid to power machinists indoors. The very worst case with which we have met occurred—as the worst payments mostly do—in an outlying district where a London firm had established a small workshop, which is now closed. A young woman machined and pressed a coat and skirt of black cloth for 8d. The skirt had five double-stitched seams and a band of lining with four rows of stitching at the hem. The coat was an unlined sack, faced with cloth. The making of these two



garments took nearly a day. Of course she had not a power machine. The workers supplied cotton. When silk was used 2*d.* more was paid her, but more than two-pennyworth of silk was used. The indoor hands were paid at the same rates but, we believe, did not provide cotton. They, too, used foot machines.

From another outlying district comes the case of Mrs. Y. who works for a local middlewoman. She machines tweed coats forty-seven inches long at 5½*d.* each, and each takes two hours to do. They have "cased seams," Chesterfield fronts, turned back collars and cuffs and two pockets. She also machined at 4*d.* each, a few lined skirts of very thick cloth, with welted seams and pleats at the foot. She has to provide cotton; one reel (2¼*d.*) makes three coats. This woman and her mother have worked many years for the same middlewoman who formerly paid 10*d.* or 11*d.* for work for which she now pays 5*d.* She also used to provide cotton and machine needles. Some years ago they could earn as much as 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week; now working the same hours they would make but 10*s.* or 12*s.* In this state of affairs the bonus offered by the middlewoman (6*d.* if 15*s.* a week is earned, 1*s.* if 20*s.*) seems rather illusory. When work was slack they tried another woman who gave them the 4*d.* skirts. A regular worker for this second middlewoman, however, says that she pays 4½*d.* or 5*d.* for unlined skirts of which one can be done easily in an hour; and that for three-quarter length single-breasted coats she pays 5½*d.* each. The explanation

probably is that the second employer pays her regular hands at about the same rate (in one instance higher) as her neighbour, but that she offers lower rates to casual workers.

Another woman used to work at home for a firm that has many retail shops. We have some reports of very poor pay by this firm some years ago, but believe that a deliberate effort was at one time made to improve both the sort of work and the rate of pay. This woman, Mrs. A., made voile costumes with silk strappings at 4*s.* 6*d.* each and could easily do one in a day. "Guards' coats" she has made at 2*s.* 6*d.* each and could do more than one in a day. For the machining only of sample coats in lace she received 5*s.*, and for some other costumes 3*s.* 6*d.* and 4*s.* each. She provided silk, cotton, machine and firing for pressing. She once made six costumes at 4*s.*, and the silk and cotton came to 1*s.* 3*d.* She has not worked for three years and a half and hears that wages have dropped, and that, for instance, the 2*s.* 6*d.* coats are now 10*d.* Her own wage-book shows an average over thirty-four weeks of 14*s.* 3¼*d.*, work being very slack in some weeks.

In another home-work case, rather elaborate long alpaca coats are made for 1*s.* each and take about three hours; tweed full-length coats, taking about two hours, 11*d.*

From the cases already quoted readers will see that a payment of from 1*s.* to 2*s.* for making a costume is not extremely unusual. Yet an employer, who makes mantles and costumes wholesale, assured the Select Committee on Home Work that

the lowest price at which he knew of costumes being made was 3s. 6d. (answer 1373). He also said that he knew of no such thing in the east of London as a woman or a man who takes an article and works at it in their own room (answer 1444). We note this point as an example of how possible it is for an intelligent business man to remain unaware, after nearly thirty years' experience, of what is happening outside his own workplace even in his own trade. His impression that costumes are not made at these very low rates in the East-end, though not absolutely correct, has however, some justification, for as far as our investigations go we believe that they are not largely made there. The majority of cases that have come under our notice occur either in the south of London or in outlying districts. They are cases both of indoor and of outdoor work and it is our strong impression that both in the mantle department and in the costume department these low rates of pay are becoming more common. Nothing approaching to a standard, hardly even to a current wage, can be discerned, but there is a tendency, and that tendency seems to be unquestionably downward.



## CHAPTER IV

### DRESSMAKING

WHEN ladies' tailoring, wholesale costumes and blouses have been separately classified, dressmaking properly so-called occupies but a small chapter. A good deal of dressmaking is done in those wholesale workshops, or factories, that supply shops, and a good deal also in the workrooms of various shops, and the facts concerning these have been indicated in chapter iii. The line between "tailoring" and "dressmaking" as applied to women's clothes is one marked not by the place of work but by the method of working; and in the lower branches the two methods merge into a third that includes many sorts of garments. Women who make "crêpine" skirts in summer (which belong to dressmaking) make cloth or tweed skirts (which belong to tailoring) in winter. Much therefore that has been said about the wholesale trade might almost as well have appeared in this chapter.

But though the account of such dressmaking as does not fall into the last chapter will be short, it must not be understood that the trade represented is numerically small. The workplaces indeed are comparatively speaking, small. But the total

number of women employed in making dresses to measure for other women is extremely large.

No one old enough to remember the clothes worn thirty years ago by English women of the middle class can fail to recognise that in the matters of cutting, fitting and colour, dressmaking in this country is a far more skilled industry than it then was, and it seems probable that the profits, to the employer, are rather higher. On the other hand those profits can only be gained by the strenuous exercise of organising and administrative ability. The terrible recurring weekly strain of "getting the work out to time" grows heavier as dress grows more elaborate and life more hurried. In short the lady who described dressmaking as "a paying life, but a dog's life" came probably pretty near the mark.

The demands on the speed and skill of the employees has grown greater, but as far as we can judge, payment has not grown greater in proportion. In the West-end trade 18s. a week used to be the customary wage of a "full hand," whereas we have heard from both employers and employed during our inquiry of "full hands" receiving no more than 16s. in the West-end; and in the poorer parts of London the wage falls lower. On the other hand the less fashionable districts are as usual rather freer from the curse of prolonged slack time.

We were allowed to visit the work-rooms of an employer who produces some of the most beautiful dresses made in London. At the time of our visit, in February, two of the excellent rooms were un-

occupied; in the full season as many as a hundred hands are employed, nearly all of whom are paid by time, "full hands" receiving from 18s. to 25s. weekly. Slack time, however, is shortened in this establishment owing to the fact that a good deal of the best theatrical work is done here and that the dresses for new plays are made a month or more earlier than the opening of the fashionable season, and in the dead month of September. In answer to an inquiry as to what girls did in the slack time this lady told us that the workers whom she picks out to keep on during such periods are those whose need is greatest, and also that, as she is sometimes able to send girls for a week or more to work in the country houses of her customers, she makes a point of sending those whom she knows to be dependent upon their own earnings. She told us that she had formerly a system of fines for unpunctuality. Workers who came in late were fined 6*d.* (weekly we understood) and those who came with absolute punctuality received an extra 6*d.* out of the money paid by the others. The plan resulted in the late arrival of girls who were comfortably off and could afford to indulge themselves at a small loss, while girls who needed money were glad to come to time and get an extra sixpence. She is under the impression that the law now forbids this, and has therefore dropped the system.

Another lady who also does high-class private dressmaking has a rather smaller establishment most admirably arranged and managed. The rooms are excellent, and a good tone—the result,



we feel sure, of personal influence—prevails. Good, quiet manners and a quiet style of dress and hair-dressing are required, and the refined appearance of the workers was remarkable. This lady tells us that it is her principle to treat all her workers with trust, and she very seldom finds that they fail to deserve it. There are no fines, but small prizes are given for punctuality and tidy hair. The latter desideratum is encouraged by the provision at the employer's expense of black ribbons for tying back the hair of the younger girls. The same tact that provides hair ribbons and gives small prizes in lieu of fines is shown in the fixing of work hours. Nominally these are from 8.55 to 8, but in practice only occasionally go on after 7.30. In what would be slack seasons, *i.e.*, in January and September, regular customers may have their own materials made up, and this device helps to keep work going, though little or no profits are made. Payment is by time, and no full hand gets less than 18s. Both these employers are women of education and culture, and here, as in some other instances, we were impressed by the immense opportunities for good which a factory or work-room affords to an educated and enlightened woman who genuinely cares about the workers.

A curious contrast to these houses is presented by the case of Mrs. P., who has a small suburban lower-middle-class connection. Her only employees are three or four little girls whom she takes straight from school and keeps for a year, paying them only 1s. a week, but teaching them every

department of the work and placing them at the end of the year as "improvers"—if possible in West-end houses. One of her last year's learners is now, at fifteen, working in Bond Street at 7s. or 8s. a week. She reports that they "always look in and tell me how they are getting on." As many establishments refuse to take learners this woman helps perhaps to redress the balance.

It is unfortunately becoming less common for girls to learn and to practise the whole of the dressmaking trade. They learn bodices, or skirts, or sleeves; they become machinists or finishers. Specialisation at a later stage may be necessary, but the general knowledge and adaptability that come of knowing the different departments make a better worker even of the specialist, and a high level is seldom reached by any one who is not, in a measure, an "all round hand." A dressmaker should be a dressmaker indeed, not merely a "skirt hand" or a "sleeve hand."

In another suburban establishment of a good class employing thirty hands, the highest wage is 16s.; while in another, of a lower grade, the employer tells our investigator that "a *very* good hand of eighteen or upwards might make 12s., but this would be exceptional."

Fourteen to fifteen shillings is the highest rate paid by a very nice woman whose customers are chiefly the tradespeople or forewomen of the neighbourhood. She complains of the competition of wholesale work. The forewoman in an establishment, about which we have particulars, when asked

4s. for the making of a shirt-blouse said (quite truly), "Why, I should pay  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  for that in my place." This employer (who has not long succeeded a relative at the head of this business) finds her workers untrustworthy, and apt to leave work undone or to scamp it if she is away. Perhaps, though an educated woman and kind, she has not the gift of management.

A similar complaint comes from an able West-end employer, also a woman of education and intelligence, who says that a dishonest, shirking spirit is common among them.\*

We have a case of a young woman working on the premises of a middlewoman who gets work from an expensive shop. Several workers are employed; the weekly wage of this one (we rather understood of all) is 20s., and work is regular.

One of the pleasant memories of our investigation is our call upon Mrs. D. and her daughters, who lived in a pleasant block of dwellings belonging to the London County Council. The pretty, well-mannered younger girl opened the door to us and received us rather shyly, but within a few minutes the mother and the elder girl came upstairs laden with parcels—their Saturday afternoon's marketing—and Mrs. D. soon comprehended that we were harmless persons (though, possibly, foolish), and was ready enough to talk about conditions of work.

\* In our experience working girls (taken as a class) work well when they genuinely trust and like their employer, or when they find their employment thoroughly congenial. If they think themselves unjustly treated they are exceedingly apt to work as badly as they can without incurring dismissal.



She was a skilled dressmaker, and being left a widow while her children were still young returned to work. She is employed by a West-end firm, and receives "good money," a statement which from other observations we understand to mean not less, and probably more, than 20s. weekly. The daughter (about twenty) earns 16s., and the little one 9s. The mother taught them both to be good needlewomen before they went to work. These were happy, cheerful, competent people, quite resolved not to be underpaid. In slack time once Mrs. D. had applied to a middlewoman who offered her as many mantles as she cared to do (at home) at  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  each, an offer which Mrs. D. scornfully declined.

Competent and intelligent was Miss E., whom we found making a dress in her own room with the assistance of her sister and another younger girl, but she was neither happy nor cheerful. She was, on the contrary, in a condition of extreme exasperation and bitterly resentful of the injustice with which she considered she was treated. The dress which she was making was of thin woollen stuff trimmed with bands of very handsome embroidery; these were finished off with little gold cords and drops, the drops made by the worker out of gold stuff. There were tucks both upon the bodice and upon the skirt. It was cut by her from material and measures supplied, and would take quite two days to complete. She never knew beforehand what she would be paid. (The employer is of course bound by law to inform her, but this part of the law is frequently disregarded.) The work was beautifully done and

so was that of an elaborately tucked silk blouse that was in course of making. She provides work-room, machine, fire, irons and all tools, cotton, hooks, &c. In busy seasons she often has to work late to complete orders. On one occasion a telegram was sent her when a customer was waiting to be fitted, and an attempt was made to deduct the cost of it. She resisted, successfully, but soon afterwards a petticoat was given her to make, in which there was "quite two shillings' worth of work," and when she took it in, payment was refused, and the work treated as a set-off against the telegram.

A certain proportion of dressmaking is still carried on at the earliest stage of industrial evolution, *i.e.*, an individual worker cuts, makes and finishes individual garments for other individuals. Such a case came under our notice in a West Central district. The worker was a young married woman with one child; her husband, a tailor, when his own work is slack, helps her. They pay 12s. 6d. for two rooms and employ a girl to come in and do the housework. The customers of Mrs. A. are the people of the neighbourhood, and we think her earnings are but small.

Another woman in the same district tries to live by the same sort of work but says that in slack times people don't have clothes made. She employs two girls, one of whom we fancy pays to be taught. Abject poverty weighed upon this poor woman who had four young children, one very delicate. The husband had gone away in search of work and had not so far succeeded in finding any.

Yet another stage of dressmaking is exemplified by Mrs. E. who goes out to sew by the day at customers' houses and also does jobs at home. She is paid 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. by the day, and except in August and September gets regular work. In the evenings she works at home for servants of the families who employ her by the day, and her average earnings, excluding the slack season, are 21s. a week. She has an invalid husband and two children at school; a son earning 10s. and living at home gives her 8s.

The dressmaking trade, then, shows us an army of women, mostly young, working generally for a weekly wage of from 15s. to 18s., and liable generally to slackness of employment during at least two months of the year. The fortunate few attain to 20s. or even to as much as 24s. a week; and occasionally a fitter will rise to a position of real comfort. We actually have an instance of a cutter and fitter in a very good private dressmaking house who is paid £4 a week—probably the highest figure we shall have occasion to record in this Report.



## CHAPTER V

### DRESSMAKING—BLOUSES

THAT form of separate bodice called in English by the not very apposite name of "blouse," has become so much a permanent item in women's clothing as to have factories allotted to its production.

Sometimes, indeed, blouses are made on the same premises with dresses or with fine underclothing, but in many instances we find factories or workshops devoted to the making of blouses alone. Power machines are largely employed, and so are the many-needled machines which will stitch five or even seven parallel tucks simultaneously. The hem-stitching machine, too, is found in some places, and of course the buttonhole machine, but not often that feather-stitching machine which is to be seen in some underlinen factories.

One of such factories we visited was in an old-fashioned suburb that was pervaded not so many years ago by a Caldecott-like picturesqueness, by old brick houses and grass plots with posts and chains in front. Now new streets of ugly little houses are growing up on each side of the main road, and in the main road itself trams run and shop windows border the pavement. The region is becoming

industrial and factories are growing up. That belonging to Mr. and Mrs. U. occupies part of a hideous new building let as factories or workshops to employers in various trades. The thud of heavy machines came from the workrooms where Mr. U.'s employees were busy making blouses of many different kinds. Light, large and clean were these workrooms, and as we stood in them the floors throbbed and pulsed under our feet, and we had to strain our ears to catch the words of Mrs. U.'s explanations. There were power machines, but not many, nor of the speediest kind, and there were also treadle machines. Along the long tables girls were sitting; here and there one was fitting a blouse upon the "stand"—the modelled figure which is so slender in the waist, so flat in the back and so singularly inhuman. The blouses were extremely varied; we saw some of woollen material, some of silk and some of lace. Most were pretty; all seemed well made. In this place each girl makes a blouse throughout, machining and then finishing. One girl was sitting unoccupied, whether waiting for a stand or for a machine we did not learn. Nor were we able to ascertain the wages. Mrs. U. replied oracularly to our inquiries that it all depended on the worker. "Girls," she added, "*can* make a pound a week." They are all paid by the piece.

Quite near is the factory of Mr. L. who had been described as a "driving employer." When we saw his wage-books we understood why; he paid by time in every instance, and since the time-worker is not spurred, as the piece-worker is, by her own

interest, the employer has to do the spurring. Wages began at £1 5s. and descended to 5s. or 6s. These last figures Mr. L. told us (no doubt truly) applied to little girls who were beginning. Quite a reasonable number were marked at 15s. or upwards. But there was a mysterious second column, the figures in which were often lower. Attention being called to this point Mr. L. said the difference represented days or half-days "off" taken by workers. There were strokes which were explained as representing days. We doubt, however, whether, supposing this to be the correct explanation, the days "off" were taken voluntarily. We suspect that they were due to lack of work. Mr. L. however declared the work to be regular. We did not see the workrooms; he discoursed with us on the staircase and favoured us with a great deal of autobiography.

There are two firms the names of which have often recurred in the course of our inquiries and almost always in connection with very low payments. The former of these—which we will distinguish by the letter X—appears in connection both with indoor and outdoor work; the latter—which we will call Y—chiefly in connection with home-work, though indoor hands are employed.

Miss S. used to work for Messrs. X., and among the garments she made for them were: blouses of Japanese silk, having a lattice of straps all down the front (this is made up on paper, the paper being afterwards torn away) besides tucks and four rows of insertion on the front; the backs, collars and



cuffs all have tucks and insertion, and the sleeves are tucked through their whole length. For these blouses (of which, working hard, she could only make three in a day) she was paid 4s. a dozen. For alpaca blouses, less elaborate, she was paid 3s. a dozen and could make six in a day. For plain shirts she was paid 1s. 2d. a dozen and could not, even using a power machine, make a dozen in a day. She had to pay 2d. a week for use of the kitchen, and if she earned as much as 10s., 3d. was deducted for power. She had to supply cotton which cost 4½d. in every 8s. or 9s.

Identically the same figures were given to us by Miss T. who, however, said that the blouses at 4s. a dozen took her so long that she could not estimate the time. At one time Miss. T. used to earn 10s. or 11s. here, but payments had fallen so much that she had only, in the week before that in which we saw her, earned 7s. 10d. When visited she had just left Messrs. X. and gone to a firm from which she was to receive a time-wage of 14s.

Another girl who used to work for Messrs. X. gave up doing so because she could never make more than 10s. or 11s. a week.

Mrs. B. makes plain shirts with half-inch tucks at the back, a box-pleat in front, turned down collars, and turned back cuffs at 2s. 6d., 2s. 9d. and 3s. a dozen.

Several of the workers of whom we have reports are working or have worked for Messrs. A. One of these is a machinist doing hem-stitching and frilling by treadle machine. She is paid 4d. per

dozen blouses, or 4*d.* per dozen yards, and being both strong and quick can do the quantity in half an hour, although most people would require three-quarters. She puts her average wage at 15*s.* so that there must be a good deal of time lost, either in arranging the machine or in waiting for work. This girl has a strong sense of responsibility towards her fellow workers, and remarked that it made you look alive when you felt that you might be keeping others waiting so that they could not earn their money. She and a companion agreed that the firm for which they now worked paid well and quoted 8*s.* to 12*s.* a dozen as rates given to blouse machinists; they added, however, that the organisation was, somehow, not good, that girls were kept waiting for pieces to be cut out, and that work got piled up for the cutter. Probably the business requires either two cutters or a cutting machine.

It may be noted that the rate of pay, the quality of the machines and the capacity of the worker are not the sole determining factors in the amount of work accomplished, or in that of wages received at the week's end. The organising faculty of the forewoman or "head of the room" counts for much. In a certain factory where we had a special opportunity of learning details of internal management we found that, at the same rate of payment, different rooms showed different average earnings, a difference unquestionably attributable to the personal qualities of the forewoman. Even amid methods of production so highly mechanised as some of ours, the human equation continues to remain very important.

A finisher in A.'s factory is paid 6*d.* per dozen for plain blouses. Each has six buttons, ten hooks and loops and a certain amount of work to the collar and the cuffs. She can finish six in an hour. For evening blouses, including the making of a belt and a ruche, she receives 6*d.* each, and one occupies her for two hours. At one time pay was higher; blouses now finished at 6*d.* per dozen were formerly 9*d.* and 10*d.*, and moreover the present blouse has more work in it. Finishers are not paid more for sample blouses, but machinists are, and the finishers who say that samples are more troublesome and take longer, complain of this. This finisher took an average of her wages for nineteen weeks and found it to be 9*s.* 6*d.* weekly. A machinist here, an older worker, averages about 14*s.*; and a presser is paid 3*d.*, 4*d.*, and 6*d.* per dozen for various sorts of blouses. We were not able to learn either the time occupied in pressing a dozen or the amount earned by a presser in a week.

At another factory of about the same standing as this a machinist is paid 5*d.* each for plain blouses, of which she can do one in an hour; 1*s.* 8*d.* each for handkerchief blouses of which she can do two in a day; and 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* for lace blouses of which she can do one in a day. All materials are provided by the employer. She averages 15*s.* weekly. The best work here is done by time workers who are paid 21*s.* and, says this girl, work very hard for it.

In another factory, now closed, a sample hand received 18*s.* a week and from this total had to



deduct the enormous percentage of  $2d.$  in every shilling for power, so that her real wages were  $15s.$ ; and out of this lesser total she had to pay for cotton and for hot water a sum of about  $9d.$  a week. There were other serious discomforts in this place and it is a relief to think that girls are no longer exposed to them.

A machinist now earning  $12s.$  a week with no deductions nor charges at a local middlewoman's, used to work for a City firm and to be paid  $3d.$  each for plain blouses of which she could do six or seven in a day\*; and  $6d.$  or  $6\frac{1}{2}d.$  for fancy blouses of which three or four can be made in a day. Cotton was provided, but power was paid for at the following rates: under  $5s.$ ,  $2d.$ ; under  $10s.$ ,  $4d.$ ; over  $10s.$ ,  $8d.$ ; over  $20s.$ ,  $1s.$  Many of the above blouses are expensive as well as elaborate, and sell, retail, at high prices. Blouse makers employed even in first-rate West-end establishments are sometimes no better paid. A girl of nineteen working in a most expensive place (from the customer's point of view) receives only  $8s.$  weekly wages, and spends  $2s.$  a week on fares. Fortunately for herself this worker has, at present, parents who can help to support her.

Without an actual comparison of blouse with blouse, it is impossible to compare the rates paid to any two workers, much less the respective rates of factory workers. This difficulty will be exemplified.

\* This is the factory, one of the forewomen in which told a dressmaker that  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  was the price for making a plain blouse. See p. 88.

by the case of the young women whom we have called Miss R. and Miss C. (*see* p. 101). The blouses with the trellis work on net, made by them, appear in description much the same as those made inside the factory of Messrs. X., at 4s. per dozen. These girls were paid 3s. per dozen. At first sight this looks like a case of lower piece-work rates to home-workers; but the blouses may, in fact, have been of a different pattern. Or, again, by the time that Miss R. and Miss C. had them to make, the rate within the factory, too, may have fallen.

This trade, almost more clearly than any yet described, shows how nearly impossible for any private investigators is the task of discovering, in detail, how much work is done for a shilling by each worker and for each employer. What can be discovered is a rough average total of possible weekly earnings, gross and net, in each particular case. This average total we shall find to vary from case to case, but very seldom to attain a figure that can be regarded as, in any larger sense, a living wage. As between home-workers and factory workers, the rank and file shows no marked difference; but the higher posts are mainly for the factory worker. At the same time we are inclined to believe that, although we have seen none, there are, probably, a very few home-workers doing a comparatively small quantity of very good work at comparatively high pay. We also know that there are, scattered over London, women earning something like a living by making blouses for individual customers. One of these whom we visited makes

almost entirely for teachers in the local elementary schools who, as she remarks, wear a great many clean blouses. Thus are the various threads of life interwoven; the Education Acts and the duty recognised by all instructors of setting an example to youth, combine to keep comfortable a certain household in an out-of-the-way street of a dull neighbourhood.

To return to the more usual walks of homework in the blouse trade.

A bright intelligent woman whose husband is very delicate and consequently very often out of work takes blouses to machine from a firm of which we have no other record. She makes black cotton blouses with pin tucks each side, a machined box-pleat in front, a yoke back with two inverted pleats, stiff cuffs, stiff stand-up collar and soft turned-down collar, double-stitched throughout, and is paid 2s. 11d. a dozen less the cost of cotton (something below 2d.); eight in a day is a hard day's work. She also does plain shirts at 1s. 10d. a dozen and can do a dozen a day; for these also she of course provides cotton. When her husband is in work she works for about six or seven hours a day; when he is unemployed she works longer. The rent of their four-roomed flat which she keeps clean and comfortable is 7s. 3d. One of her children is at work (in a blouse factory), one at school. Formerly, this woman tells us, she could earn 12s. to 14s. a week, but now rarely takes more than 5s. Work is so slack that it is impossible to get enough. An unmarried friend who depends upon her own earnings had in the two



previous weeks (August 1908) been able to get only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  dozens a week.

A woman living in the outer ring of London took blouses for a time from a factory in a suburb but gave up the work because the rates of payment were so low. The best weekly payment she ever received, though she sometimes worked very long hours, was 7s. 9d. To make 8s. or 9s. she says it would be necessary to work twelve or fourteen hours. Of course she provides machine and cotton. She has had blouses at  $1\frac{3}{4}$ d., at 2d. and at  $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. each, and each takes an hour to make. Once she had six blouses at 7d. each. This is a married woman whose husband "doesn't earn very good money."

Miss R. and Miss C. are two young unmarried women who both have very good homes with their parents. The mother of one gave them a room in which the two worked together making blouses. They took work—a most unfortunate beginning—from the employer whom we have called X. and also some from two other firms. They made some cotton blouses that had two rows of insertion, strapping in the centre, two-and-a-half inch tucks brought down to a mitre and piped, and quarter-inch tucks to the armhole; for these they were paid 5s. a dozen and three people working together could only make one dozen in a day. Some blouses of nun's veiling had sixteen tucks each side of the front, a box-pleat in the centre, seven tucks in cuffs and collar, twelve tucks in back; for these they were paid 3s. 6d. a dozen, and one person could do eight in an ordinary

day's work or twelve by working very long hours. The worst paid of all were some blouses with V-shaped yokes and a trellis-work of strapping on net ; of these one worker could not complete six in a day, and only 3s. was paid for a dozen. From a better firm (one of those mentioned above) they took out some blouses that had seven and eight rows of insertion in the yoke and three medallions bordered with insertion ; for the machining of these, without finishing, they received 8s. Unfortunately they could only get a few (this firm does most of its work on the premises); from this firm also, we believe, came the plain shirts for machining for which they got 5s. a dozen ; one person could do from eight to ten in a day. From a third firm they took blouses which they had to cut out, make and finish completely ; these had V-yokes of embroidery, gauged fronts, band-cuffs with a ruching of lace, buttons and buttonholes. 9s. a dozen was paid, but the blouses were so elaborate and there was so much finishing that they did not pay. As machines cost 1s. each weekly, as cotton had to be provided (4d. for a dozen of plain blouses) and fares paid for taking work to and fro, they found blouse making at home unprofitable. Time was wasted, too, for Messrs. X. insist upon having work brought in complete before they will give a new supply. Altogether they found that, although they paid no rent and although they employed a young helper at 2s. 6d. a week, they could not clear above 5s. or 6s. each. So one of them returned to private dress-making and is now receiving a clear regular wage

of 12s. a week with a prospect of rising to 18s., and the other has gone to work on the premises of a middle-woman in the West-end who pays her 10s. a week. This worker—who is only a blouse maker, not a trained dressmaker—says that, as far as she knows, no girls in her trade get more than 10s. or 12s. a week.

We, however, are aware that in one factory sample hands get 21s. a week, and that there are machinists who get a regular wage of 14s.

For Messrs. Y. (who employ a considerable number of hands indoors and also send out a good deal of work) four women interviewed have worked or are working at home.

One of these and a friend (or sister) used to work together. They made plain shirt blouses, the yoke and cuffs properly stitched and nicely finished at  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  each. After a while they were asked to take them at  $1\frac{1}{4}d.$  and refused. If the work was not well done, the examiner at the factory "would not pass it." We presume that in that case it has to be done over again. Their machine cost 1s. 6d. a week; they paid for cotton, but seemed doubtful about the precise relation between a reel at  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  and a dozen blouses. They also had to pay fares for conveying work to and fro. Working long hours the two women earned about 15s. a week.

Another married woman was, before marriage, an indoor hand at Messrs. Y.'s, and in those days often earned up to 20s. a week, working, as she now does, with a treadle machine. Her average wage over twenty-six weeks—of the busy, not the slack season—



as shown by her book was 7*s.* 4*d.* a week. During many weeks of the year she can get no work at all. Her husband is in constant but not well paid work, there are two children and the rent of their flat is 6*s.* 8*d.* She makes chiefly shirt blouses, stitched throughout ; they have four rows of stitching round the cuffs, four down the front, two round the yoke, buttons and a draw string ; she is paid 2*s.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 8*d.* or 3*s.* a dozen and if she works long hours can do from a dozen to a dozen and a half in a day. Her usual number of working hours is about eight—when she can get work enough.

Two other women have worked at home both for Messrs. X. and for Messrs. Y. Mrs. T. makes mostly cheap blouses with tucks and insertion and is paid from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. If she worked hard for eleven hours she could make a dozen of the cheaper kind. Her machine costs 1*s.* 6*d.* a week and her return fare to the factory is 7*d.* This woman at one time had eight machines, and women working for her ; she then made a good profit. The firm from which she now takes work has the tucking and gauging done in the factory and she is sometimes kept waiting two or three hours till the tucking is done, and so, with coming and going, loses half a day's work. Her husband's work is casual and they have six children. The eldest is 14 but his mother is trying to keep him at school until his teacher finds work for him. Persons who know the deterioration that often occurs in a desultory interval between school and employment will feel how wise is Mrs. T.'s wish. Rent is 9*s.* but part of the house

is let off. "Seemed very poor" is the visitor's comment.

Another woman, Mrs. H., living in the same district, has a very similar story. She too has a husband in casual work and five children, none of whom are at present earning. Her rent, in a very poor street, is 5*s.* 6*d.* ; children and house are both clean. She has had blouses both from Messrs. X. and Messrs. Y., mostly cheap but elaborate with tucks and insertions at from 2*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. She and a friend working together can do about 1½ dozen at 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* in a day. They once had some skirt and blouse costumes to make, the skirts having three tucks, and were paid 5*s.* 9*d.* a dozen for them. The two working together could only manage one dozen in a week. (This fact we think shows them to be rather slow workers.) They have to provide machine, cotton and fares, and the last item, when the journey has to be made three or four times weekly, absorbs all profits. On one occasion they had blouses to the amount of 2*s.* 3*d.* Fetching them cost 7*d.*, taking them back another 7*d.*, cotton 4*d.* ; in all 1*s.* 6*d.* leaving 9*d.* out of the 2*s.* 3*d.*, for division between the two workers. These deductions we may remark would be the same whatever the speed with which the work was accomplished.

In another household three sisters together make blouse-suits at 21*s.* to 30*s.* a dozen, and complete the dozen in two days. Their mother keeps house and takes the work to and fro, her fares costing 6*d.* Thus, if the daughters were indoor hands, their fares would cost 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

On the whole blouse-making seems to be worse paid than dressmaking proper; the women earning sums upon which they can live decently are less numerous and the proportion of those who earn, when all deductions are made, less than 2*d.* an hour, seems considerably higher. Nothing approaching to a standard wage exists, and payments are clearly seen to have generally declined, while the deductions in some factories are conspicuously large. It is alleged—and observation of the newer patterns confirms the statement—that better work and more work is demanded than was formerly the case. The employers who try, as some do, to maintain a better rate of pay, are, we incline to think, hard pressed. How far they suffer from provincial competition we do not know, that important point lying beyond the scope of our investigation. We are acquainted, however, with one provincial factory turning out a great number of blouses in a year, and believe that there is a good deal of work done, probably at very low rates, in the country. In its present state the trade is one offering few chances of earning as much as 20*s.* a week, and likely, if conditions remain unaltered, to offer fewer and fewer. Moreover a change of fashion may at any moment doom it to partial—or less probably to total—extinction.



## CHAPTER VI

### UNDERCLOTHING—SHIRTS

FROM the time of Tom Hood downwards shirt-making has borne—and not undeservedly—the reputation of a cruelly underpaid trade. In no industry, perhaps, are there women who receive less for an hour's work than some shirtmakers do, and in no other industry, so far as we know, do instances occur of such spasmodic and extraordinarily casual work.

At the top of the industry lies the bespoke trade, part of which is done in workshops and part by home workers.

As fair instances of a machinist and of a finisher in the bespoke trade, we may quote the cases of Miss A. and Miss L. Miss L. machines shirts of various kinds in her employer's workshop in the West-end; some of them are of silk, some of viyella, &c.; she is about eighteen years old and lives with parents who are well off. Her weekly wage is 12s. but in addition to this a bonus is given, in the shape of a small percentage upon every £1 that she earns, and for the purpose of the bonus the shirts are reckoned at 3s. a dozen. She reports that she can do a dozen in a day so that in the five

and a half working days of a week her earnings would be estimated at 16s. 6d. We do not know the amount of the percentage ; it would scarcely be higher than 5% and in that case would amount to 10d. a week in busy seasons. She reports however that in busy times she can make 16s. or 17s. weekly. This indicates, we fancy, a good deal of overtime.\*

Miss A. finishes "best" shirts in her employer's workshop, her work being to make buttonholes, to sew on buttons, a label and a tape, to put in gussets and to run tucks in the sleeves, intended to be let out after washing in case of shrinkage. She is paid on the following scale : 12 buttonholes, 4d. ; 12 buttons, 1d. ; tucks, 1d. ; 4 gussets, 1d. ; label,  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. ; tape,  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. The buttons and holes take her about an hour to do, the remainder of the finishing about 20 minutes. The payment for each shirt therefore totals 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and the time employed in earning 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 80 minutes. Silk is provided for buttonholes, but Miss A. has to supply cotton, of which, however, only a small quantity is used. She earns about 14s. weekly, and thinks a quick hand could earn 16s. Miss A., who would gladly make a little more money, often brings home a shirt to work on in the evening ; she is not asked to do this, and the proceeding is, in fact, illegal. As she is already, at under seventeen, suffering from weak eyes and wearing glasses, her industry seems sadly suicidal. She tells us that generally the buttonholing and the finishing proper are done separately, but that she is

\* Not necessarily overtime in the legal sense but time beyond the usual 9 to 7. It would be allowable to work until 9.

allowed to do both parts as less trying to the sight. Her father was a railway servant, but had money left to him and sank it in a business which did not pay. The company—as seems to be the general rule with railway companies—would not take him back, and he now earns but 23s. a week. There are seven children, of whom only two are earning, and their rent (for three rooms) is 5s.

Sometimes high-class shirts are put out to be done in a small workshop. We are acquainted with one, and learn that 2s. each is paid by the retailer for white shirts that have to be cut out; 1s. 10d. each for white shirts already cut out; 1s. 10d. for an uncut coloured shirt, and 1s. 9d. for a cut out one.

A woman of considerable experience gives us some interesting reminiscences. Twelve or fourteen years ago she used to make the bodies of shirts entirely by hand, and used to think she had done a good day's work when she had earned 1s. This, we gather, was bespoke work. For a firm supplying customers of the upper middle-class she made fronts by hand, put in side-pieces, sewed on buttons and tacked the backs of collars. She was paid 6d. for each shirt, and could do one in an hour. In this workroom a quick worker, as she was, could earn 16s. to 18s. weekly. At one time she was a "season hand" in the West-end at 15s. a week. Later she worked for a firm doing a poorer sort of trade, and made, but did not finish, Oxford shirts, for which she was paid 1¼d. each. These retailed at 4s. 11d. each. Of late years she has supported



herself and partly, or entirely, her sick husband by sewing for private customers.

Bespoke work is sometimes given out to home workers. One such case may be worth quoting, for the sake of the family picture that it gives.

Mrs. B. makes shirts entirely, machining and finishing, making the buttonholes by hand. Nearly all her work is order work. She is paid 2s. 6d. to 4s. a dozen and cannot do more than six of those at 4s. in a day. Her weekly average is 9s. or 10s. a week. She is a middle-aged married woman, eight of whose twelve children are living. For a long time past her husband has done only casual work. During 1907 he was out of work for nine months. He is now a carman. Two of the children are earning, one boy a messenger in the City, earns 7s. weekly; one girl has been for over a year in a very well-known factory and earns 6s. a week. She was at home unwell when the investigator called and she told her that a man had been discharged from the factory, his work given to a boy and the boy's to her. It became her part to wheel a truck of goods from room to room and the work was too heavy for her. The mother was going to ask that the girl might be put to something different. Their rent—in no very agreeable neighbourhood—is 11s. 6d. a week. When the husband is out of work and when she can get enough to do, the wife works long hours, but there are many weeks in which she has only 3s. or 4s. worth of shirts to do, and some in which she has none at all. Formerly she and her mother used to do a dozen at 4s. daily, she machining and

her mother finishing, including the handmade buttonholes. Lately she had shirts at  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  each with ten buttonholes in each. As they take a long time to do, this pay is very poor.

In modern factories shirtmaking is rather minutely subdivided. For example, a woman may be, like Case 185, a collar turner, employed solely in preparing collars and cuffs to be machined. She is paid  $6d.$ ,  $9d.$ , or  $1s.$  a gross and can do nine dozen at  $6d.$ , or five dozen at  $1s.$  in an hour.  $8d.$  per gross was formerly paid for the  $6d.$  work, and  $1s. 3d.$  for the  $1s.$  work. Her average wage, now, does not exceed  $10s.$  or  $12s.$  a week. She always brings work home (an illegal proceeding, and one that helps to lower wages) after her day's work (from 9 to 8) in the factory, and often works two or three hours into the night. If she did not, she could not, at her present rates of pay, support herself, as she has to do. Her work is mostly done with the fingers, but for some shapes of cuffs and collars scissors and a small sharp instrument are used. Reductions, she tells us, have been made not in her own department only, but throughout the factory. We shall have occasion to refer, further on, to the rates which she quotes as those of the buttonholers in this factory.

A machinist in a large factory making shirts of medium and cheap quality is paid for boy's flannel shirts  $2s. 3d.$  a dozen, for men's  $2s. 6d.$  or  $2s. 9d.$  She can make a dozen in a day. For men's tennis shirts with pocket and soft turnover collars,  $3s. 6d.$  a dozen. Of these she can make eight in a day.

Here, as is often the case, the cheaper work brings in rather the higher sum. Cotton costs about 5*d.* in 6*s.* (we find a consensus of opinion among shirt machinists that 1*d.* in the shilling represents pretty fairly the cost of cotton). This worker is about twenty years of age the daughter of highly respectable parents, her father having worked for twenty-eight years for one employer, and now holding a responsible position. Her mother, a superior woman, tells us that she and her husband have taken their daughter away from various places where the workers were overworked and underpaid. This one now earns 16*s.* to 18*s.* and has earned over 20*s.*, the flannel shirts, which are the better paid work, being now given to her. Formerly the workers in this factory paid for power, but not now. She has not much slack time and in her slackest week did not earn less than 12*s.* This girl's position—as long as wages remain unreduced—is, as things go, remarkably good. Able and industrious as she is, she may not improbably, if she remains at work, become a forewoman. On the other hand if she marries (and that an able, industrious and superior young woman should marry is to be desired) the chances of her finding a husband whose position is not insecure are very small, and middle-age may not impossibly find her a worn-out drudge finishing shirts in a poverty-stricken home in order to get food and clothes for her children.

A great number of machinists in shirt factories are not paid so well. One for example who has been at work for three years is getting a weekly



wage of 8*s.* and, like many girls, hands over the money to her mother, who clothes and feeds her.

Among home workers we have a case of a machinist who has worked for forty years. Her old husband was in a skilled trade but is now past that sort of work. He helps her turn down seams, &c., and carries the work to and fro. The investigator saw the work she was doing : Oxford shirting and flannel garments. Shirts for which she receives 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* a dozen have cuffs and collars and are double-stitched throughout. Some have lined yokes and diagonal fronts. She does no finishing. Prices range from 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. She can do two dozen at 9*d.* in a day, or eight at 2*s.* 6*d.*, and manages to make 10*s.* to 12*s.* by working very hard. They have 3*s.* a week Poor Law Relief, pay 3*s.* for a large room, and manage to live upon the shirt-making. Forty years ago she had 7*s.* 6*d.* a dozen for shirts in which there was no more work than there is in these at 2*s.* 6*d.*

Another woman has given up the work because she could no longer make enough money by it. She rarely earned more than 8*s.* 9*d.* and even so much only by working hard. She once took shirts (from quite a well-known, long-established firm) at 1*s.* a dozen. These were not double-stitched but there was a join in the cuffs and in the fly, which took time. This was the worst paid work she ever had. For the same firm she used twenty-four years ago to make silk shirts at 6*s.* 6*d.* a dozen. For these shirts 3*s.* 9*d.* is now paid and they have an additional row of stitching on cuffs and collar. She used to

expend 6*d.* a reel for silk and to go three times a week to the factory at a cost of 4*d.* each time, but even with these deductions the silk work paid well at that time.

Another woman living in a pleasantly sunny though small flat, machines shirts, chiefly of the kind known as Oxford shirts. They are double-stitched and lined back and front. She receives 2*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 8*d.*, or 2*s.* 9*d.* for a dozen, and can do one dozen shirts if she works hard from 8 in the morning till 10 P.M. The husband is often out of work, and when he was so for three months the wife kept the household on her earnings and they did not run into debt for a penny. But she says that no one knows how she worked or how little they lived on. Of their four children only one is alive. She has done shirt work from the time she was old enough to begin, and her mother did it before her. Years ago she worked for a good city firm and had 4*s.* 6*d.* and 6*s.* 6*d.* a dozen, but had to finish and make buttonholes by hand. She thinks that she earned more than she now does. Her present employer is apparently a middleman.

Another woman now machines flannel shirts at 4*s.*, for which 5*s.* 6*d.* a dozen used to be given. She says however that the middlewoman for whom she works pays far better than a neighbouring factory does. Knowing her address we can make a shrewd guess at the name of the factory owner.

Buttonholing tends to become more and more a factory employment but there are still some homeworkers who make buttonholes. An old woman

who used to work in the West-end tells us that she formerly did "very particular" buttonholes at the rate of 5*d.* per dozen and could do the dozen in an hour or an hour and a quarter. Now she gets work from a man in her neighbourhood—probably collars of a cheap kind—and is paid 5*d.* or 6*d.* for a dozen collars (36 holes) which she can finish in about three hours. She has grown slower owing to age. She lives alone, pays 3*s.* rent and has a small pension which, however, does not suffice to support her entirely. The firm for which she works may or may not be the one in which, as we learn, the indoor buttonholers have had some of their prices reduced to 4½*d.* and 5*d.* per dozen collars. An indoor worker at this place reports that she is paid 5*d.*, 5½*d.* and occasionally 6*d.* per dozen collars, the rate varying according to the quality of the collars. In fine material she can make the 36 holes in two and a half hours; in thick material she takes three hours. When her husband is out of work she brings work home though she knows this to be forbidden.

A buttonholer working a treadle machine (not a power machine) in a factory gets ½*d.* or ¾*d.* per dozen holes according to size, earns 7*s.* or 8*s.* weekly and says no woman could possibly make a living at the work.

Another worker, taking work from a middlewoman, sewed on buttons and made buttonholes for shirts that had nine buttonholes, and was paid 10*d.*, 1*s.* or 1*s.* 3*d.* a dozen. She could finish two dozen in a day and working fairly good hours could make 7*s.* or 8*s.* a week. It will be noticed that though the



piece-work price is different the totals of the factory worker and of the home-worker are identical. Taking the shirts at 1*d.* each, this woman's rate of pay was 1*d.* for nine holes plus sewing on nine buttons, as against  $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* or  $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* for a dozen holes.

A witness before the Select Committee on Home Work said (Answers 2086-2092) that she made buttonholes (by hand) and sewed on buttons to shirts having seven buttonholes each, and that she was paid 8*d.* per dozen shirts of the better kind and 5*d.* per dozen shirts of the cheaper kind. That is, she makes 84 buttonholes, in addition to sewing on buttons, sometimes for 5*d.*, sometimes for 8*d.* In other words she makes in one case as nearly as possible 17 holes for a penny, and in the other 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  for a penny. Working extremely long hours she cannot make more than 5*s.* or 5*s.* 6*d.* a week. The work comes from a middlewoman. The worker has no other source of income and has a child to keep ; and although the mother is, visibly, short of all necessaries of life, the child looks well and fat. Of the truth of her statements we are quite sure. A local church-worker well known to one of the writers of this volume had been in touch with her for several months, and Miss Macarthur who introduced the witness had seen her wage-book.

Among the large number of home-working shirt makers of West Ham, whose cases we have been permitted by the courtesy of the Outer London Inquiry Committee to examine, are to be found examples of perhaps the most casual form of work in existence. While a certain proportion of these

workers regard their occupation as a trade to live by, and while others regard it as a supplement to the inadequate regular wage of their husbands, some pursue it in a haphazard and intermittent manner. The wife of a casual labourer will, while her husband is earning, not perhaps take any shirts to do, but when he has no money, and food runs short, she will go into the nearest middlewoman's or agent's, and take a dozen or two dozen shirts. Upon these she will set to work at once and having finished them will take them back, get paid for them and buy food with the resulting pennies. Such at least is the account given by a lady who has visited hundreds of home-workers in the district. "There seems," she adds, "to be a public house and a shirt place in every street."

Among these West Ham cases we find one woman who kept an account of a year's earnings and found they amounted to £20.

In another case a woman who is regarded as an unusually rapid worker once "finished" the amazing number of 739 shirts in one week, sewing on seven buttons and making four bars to each. For this feat she was paid the princely sum of 11s. 1½d., less the cost of cotton. The number of hours' work does not appear, but the woman says that she cannot earn over 9s. in the week except by working from 5 A.M. till midnight. She was the wife of a man who had been for some years in the infirmary, and because there was only one child, Poor Law Relief was refused to her. Her rent was 2s. and her average earnings 7s. 5½d.

Looking through these West Ham cases we note several points. One is that the highest totals are apt to be made not by women in circumstances of great distress, but by those who are more or less prosperous. The wife of a man who earns "good money" or the single woman living in comfort with relations, seems more likely herself to make over 10s. than the woman whose children depend on her earnings or the single woman who lives alone and sews all day long undisturbed.

The explanation of this phenomenon, which has been remarked by previous investigators lies, we believe, partly in the greater working power of the better fed and comfortably-living human being, and partly in the fact that the comparatively prosperous person can afford to refuse very badly paid work. The woman who has no other resource than her earnings dares not risk offending her employer and is therefore easy to be beaten down.

Another point is the variation in rates of pay. One woman has worked for two factories and also for a middlewoman. For similar work one factory paid from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 11d.; another 10d. to 1s. 10d.; the middlewoman 6d. to 1s. 5d. The average per week for the first factory was 9s. 10d. : for the second 6s. 8½d.; for the middlewoman 4s. 2¾d. There are many similar instances.

Many workers report that rates of pay have fallen. One notes a decrease of 2d. and 3d. a dozen in fifteen years. Another reports that she used to make pyjamas at 11s. 3d. a dozen. The firm found a woman to do them at 6s. 8d. This woman has



made shirts throughout, machining and finishing at 1s. 6d. per dozen. Among these West Ham cases there are instances of middlemen or middlewomen paying as little as 7d. for machining a dozen shirts, and 2½d. for finishing a dozen (holes, buttons and bars).

Of the shirt trade, then, we may say that it contains a number of workers paid at rates which do indeed support life but support it upon so low a level as to render unattainable all that gives savour to existence.

Of the lowest paid group of shirt-makers (as of the lowest paid group in so many trades) it may truly be declared that modern life has taken from them all the joys of the savage and given to them none of the joys of civilisation.

## CHAPTER VII

### UNDERCLOTHING—WOMEN'S

IN the making of underclothing we find examples of every stage of manufacture. One family visited by us combines the functions of buyer, cutter, maker and outdoor vendor. The father, an alien of an unattractive type, buys cheap material which his children make up into garments. These he vends in an open-air market held two or three times a week in a neighbouring street. He also, he informs us, employs a "traveller" to sell in the chief of street markets, Petticoat Lane, or as this man calls it, "The Lane," on Saturdays and on Sunday mornings. The traveller, it appears on further inquiry, is not one of those gentlemen who may be heard vociferating among the stalls and who are known in the vernacular as "barkers," but merely a man who purchases garments in quantity at less than retail prices and takes his chance of being able to sell them again at a profit. The articles that were being made when we called upon the family were underbodices or vests of beetroot-pink flannelette and of the very poorest quality. These were to be sold retail at  $7\frac{1}{2}d.$  and the man assured us that the flannelette cost  $4\frac{3}{4}d.$  a yard and that each

garment took more than a yard. The two investigators on coming out and comparing notes found that each separately had disbelieved both statements. Some overalls for little children made, apparently, of remnants of white material and cheap embroidery, were to be sold at 2s. 6d. each. The rooms and persons of this family were not clean and the home seemed very poor. The man told us that when trade in the district was slack the people about had no money to spend and he was able to make no sales.

A woman who keeps a little shop—or rather half-shop—in the neighbourhood of a large factory, sells not only needles, cottons and such small wares, but also aprons and articles of underclothing for women and children. In the other half of the shop she runs a small laundry. She gave us very full details about her own expenses and profits and also some, which we found interesting, about the internal affairs of the before-mentioned factory. Some of the underclothing she makes herself, buying the materials and fixing a selling price that allows her about 6d. an hour for making. She sells knickerbocker drawers for a child of ten to twelve years old at 1s. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. They contain 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  yards of cotton cloth at 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per yard and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  yards of embroidery at 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., besides about a farthing's worth of tape—tenpennyworth, that is, of materials. In this case she allows, therefore, only 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for making, but probably cutting several pairs together she uses rather less stuff; making occupies about an hour. For a woman's chemise she uses 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  yards each of cotton cloth at 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. and of embroidery at 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.; about 1s. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., that



is, for materials. The selling price is 1s. 11½*d.* and making, in this case too, takes about an hour. At these prices she considers that she can give her customers good well-made articles. She also, however, sells goods that she buys ready made; for example, boys' shirts which she buys wholesale at 5s. 6*d.* a dozen and retails at the rate of 8s. 9*d.* a dozen. These shirts, she says, she could *not* make for the money. How other people succeed in getting them made, readers of the last chapter may understand. To the investigator who heard the observation, the words may well have called up a picture of the little streets of West Ham and of hungry women running with parcels of work to the middlewoman in the next turning. At one time this woman made army shirts for a City firm at 3s. 6*d.* a dozen, but says that the prices are now so low that she would not in these days make shirts. She also sells large aprons with bibs at 1s. 11¾*d.* and these, too, she says she would not make at that price; she has measured the material and finds that the apron contains 2½ yards of material at not less than 6¾*d.* a yard, and would take at least half an hour to machine. The cutter-out also ought to be paid. She is a widow living in a house of her own, the estimated rental of which is £50, and the rates and taxes upon it £20. She lets to lodgers, banks 15s. a week and calls it her rent. The laundry and her shop together bring in about £4 weekly, of which sum she considers 25s. to be clear profit.

Yet another woman makes under-garments for private customers. When seen she was making

chemises with tucked fronts and plain back. Tops of crochet are supplied by the customer (they can be bought in almost any shop below a certain level of smartness) and must be sewn on and faced on the wrong side. She fixes her charges at the rate of 3*d.* to 4*d.* an hour, and was going to charge 4*d.* for this garment. When she has not work for private customers she goes to work in a factory—where apparently the employer is always ready to give her work—at a time wage of 16*s.* She is a young married woman with one child and with a steady husband working in a trade that is highly paid but has a long slack season. They pay 7*s.* 6*d.* a week for a neat and comfortable flat in an accessible but not very agreeable district. Her previous history is interesting. She was an only daughter and her father was resolved that she should be well trained. She was therefore apprenticed in the workroom of a good London shop where she learned all branches of the dressmaking trade. After that she took a cooking course. She is probably exceptionally skilled, but hardly seems to have grasped the duty of not underselling less fortunate competitors.

A case which reflects discredit, we consider, upon private customers, is that of an elderly woman living in a suburb and making undergarments entirely by hand for private order. For combinations with insertion and trimming she gets 1*s.* 9*d.* each and occupies about two days to make one. For chemises, which take about a day and a half she has 1*s.* 6*d.* each. As may well be supposed she finds it a hard struggle to live and pay her rent. Yet

people grumble, she tells the investigator, at her charges. She will not, however, work for less and she makes the customer pay for the sewing cotton used. Much time would be saved if she were allowed to do the long seams by machine, but few customers will permit this to be done. This worker lives with a niece who goes out to work in private houses by the day and is only paid 2s. with food. As a certain number of families employ her regularly, her earnings, though low, are pretty certain. Rent is high—8s. 6d. for two rooms—and the aunt, who during her husband's life was prosperous, has evidently a hard struggle in her elder days.

Solitary workers of the type of the last two cases are perhaps commoner in the women's and children's underclothing trade than in any other except dressmaking. But much clothing, too, is made in factories and nearly all the factories give out some of their work to small workshops or to individual workers. Many good workshops have workrooms of their own; on the manufacturing premises of one well-known West-end shop 300 hands are employed in the underclothing department.

The large factories seem mostly to have begun their existence in the City where the warehouses and offices of the various firms still remain, but the actual manufacture has in nearly all cases moved away from the centre, and the factories are now to be found in working-class districts where rents are lower. Many of them are equipped with the speediest and most highly developed of modern machines. Garments are cut, a gross perhaps at a



time, by a machine whose blade or point follows a pencilled outline. Very interesting it is to see the closely-pressed bale of white material slowly dividing into two banks, and each segment of the garment coming out like a solid, shaped block. In one factory that we saw, the articles after coming from the cutting machine were sorted out into bundles, each containing all the pieces, trimmings, &c. for a garment, or a dozen garments. Of these bundles some were to go into the workrooms of the factory itself, some to home-workers in the neighbourhood, and some to Ireland. We saw some of them fetched away while we were there. In this factory care is taken that women should not be kept waiting when they bring in and take out work. The workrooms were excellently arranged, light, airy and spacious. The high-speed machines, though their pulse was, of course, quite perceptible, vibrated far less and were less noisy than some slower power-machines which we have found in other places. This, we understand, is usually the case with high-speed machines, and must we think remove some of the nervous strain of working them. The lady manager in charge of this establishment will not, however, allow quite young girls to work these machines, but keeps them to finishing, sewing on buttons, &c. We think that she is right and that girls of less than eighteen should not work power machines. All payments are by the piece. We did not see wages books but were told that 15s. was an average wage for competent hands; we were also told that the lowest rate of the very cheapest

chemises was 2s. 6d. a dozen. We observed that deductions are heavy: 3d. a week is charged for use of kitchen; machinists pay 6d. a week for power, and pressers 9d. a week for gas. Cotton (which must be that of certain makers) has to be provided by the workers and can be bought from the firm at 3½d. per reel; outside they can only procure it so cheaply by purchasing a dozen reels at a time. Hours of work are from 8.30 A.M. to 7 P.M. When work is slack it stops earlier and in very busy times may go on to 8; never later. There is a dining-room, and the lady in charge told us that on one occasion a girl came day after day bringing no dinner, in consequence of her father being out of work. Two companions thereupon shared their meal with her. The manageress discovered these facts and dinner was given to the girl by the firm until her father got work again. A system of training which is practised here and in a few other places seems to have special merits. Learners are paid 4s. a week. Each of them is placed for three months under an elder worker and whatever work the learner does is booked at the usual piece-work rates to the teacher. At first the learner not only adds nothing to her senior's profits but actually hinders her by taking up her time. Clearly therefore it is to the interest of the senior to bring the junior on as quickly as possible. At the end of three months the payment for the learner's work goes to herself.

It was interesting to compare with this establishment that of a middlewoman employing from forty to forty-five indoor hands. The mistress here, a

highly intelligent woman who evidently wishes well to her workers, had worked thirteen years for a well-known firm in the City and now takes work both from her old employer and from other people. We had a long talk with her and she seemed glad of the opportunity to discuss her business affairs. The trade, she declares, is being ruined by the severity of competition and when told of the proposal to fix a minimum wage, she expressed approval. The factory was light and airy, but not she told us, well built. All sorts of women's underclothes are made; mostly by power machines, but in a few instances by treadle machines. We saw white petticoats, flannel petticoats and camisoles in course of making. Buttonholes were made by a machine; finishing was done by hand. Payment is by the dozen and varies. We saw some petticoats at 4*s.* 4*d.* a dozen and some from 3*s.* The wages book was shown to us. Only finishers, young girls not long from school, took less than 10*s.* a week. Several workers averaged 15*s.* and some habitually received 20*s.* There are no deductions, no charges and no fines. There is some slackness, but not apparently nearly so much as in the dressmaking trade. Dinner-time was approaching before we left. There were two gas stoves for cooking and a very clean, pleasant-looking girl was looking after the preparations. The workers were of a superior type and the quality of the work excellent. We feel that a girl would be more advantageously placed with this middlewoman than in most large factories. Until a few years ago treadle machines only were used here; power



machines were put in at a cost of £200; they took up more space so that only thirty-two machinists instead of forty-eight can now be accommodated, and the output is no higher than before. Her customers, now that she has power installed, consider her able to produce more cheaply and insist upon lower terms. Also with the introduction of power, the workshop became, technically speaking, a factory, and factories have to be lime-washed by the occupier once in every fourteen months. As a workshop the landlord "did it up" once in every three years. On the whole she believes that she has lost by the alteration, beyond the £200 sunk in making it.

The cases of factory workers seen at their homes or elsewhere present some interesting features.

We have, for instance, the cases of two buttonholers. One of them works for the firm which we have called in the previous chapter by the name of Messrs. Y. She uses a power machine and is expected to turn out twelve gross of buttonholes a day—a quantity which demands very hard work. Her wages after over two years' service are 5s. a week.

The other young woman also works on her employer's premises and also uses a machine, but one worked by treadle. The daily stint required of her is fifty dozen holes, and her weekly wage is 15s. 6a. Thus we see that one firm pays 10d. for 1728 buttonholes, while another pays 31 pence for 600, or, put in other terms, while one pays 10d. for a day's work the other pays 2s. 7d. So far from the worker on the slower machine being at a disadvantage she

is paid more than three times as much by the hour and nearly ten times as much by the hole.

A capable, energetic but perhaps rather flighty young woman makes various kinds of undergarments, excluding nightdresses, finishing them completely and making buttonholes by hand. For a chemise she is paid 1s., for knickerbockers 1s. 3d., for combinations 2s. 6d. each. No charge is made for the machine, but the worker has to supply needles. In the slack time her week's earnings average 6s. or 7s. When busy they rise to 20s. She thinks underclothing a better trade than dress-making because there is less slack time. For her own part when slack time occurs she takes a spell at French polishing and continues until her employer sends to tell her that "things are busy."

Before leaving the indoor workers in this trade we must note the sole instance that has come before us in the course of this inquiry, of a woman who has renounced work in favour of prostitution. She is a handsome young widow with a little boy of six years old and used to work for a middlewoman. She was paid 2s. a dozen for chemises and drawers and earned 3s. a day, less the cost of cotton. She did not profess to have given up the work on account of poor pay, but on account of ill-health. She told the investigator that she now earned her living in another way; and the investigator's own observation left no doubt as to the nature of that other way.

Our group of home-working underclothing-makers includes some very fully detailed cases.

Number 58, with whose rates of pay for making petticoats we shall deal on a later page, works or has worked for four different firms, for two of which she makes practically identical ladies' knickerbockers. By the firm which we will call B., she is paid 2s. a dozen; by the firm which we will call D. 5s.; the knickerbockers are made of nainsook and frilled. The frills, each of which is 1 yard and 16 inches long, consist of a strip of material, an insertion, a second strip of material, a second insertion, a third strip of material and a lace edging. There are thus five rows of stitching in each frill. The actual garments are seamed, darts are made to shape them to the waist, the waist is hemmed and tapes are run in. The best work is demanded by Messrs. B., and a smaller stitch than is generally required. Of course the smaller the stitch the greater is the expenditure of time and cotton required by any piece of work. For knickerbockers with one row less of insertion Messrs. B. pay 1s. 9d. a dozen. For camisoles 2s. 9d. a dozen was paid, we do not know by which firm. The utmost number of garments which the worker could make in six days was four dozen, and to make six dozen camisoles took nine days of long hours. Cotton for the knickerbockers cost at the rate of 10d. for every 8s. 10½d. earned. This woman who is a widow does not have to work for a living. Her children who are all grown up and all earning do not wish her to work at all.

Another woman works for a middleman in her own neighbourhood and makes amongst other things



plain flannelette nightgowns of a very cheap kind. For machining these she receives  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  each; and this rate is higher by  $\frac{1}{4}d.$  than used to be the case here, and than is the case when the same work is given out at first hand. She can make eight in about 12 hours. Aprons with bibs for which  $1d.$  used to be paid, she now makes at  $\frac{1}{2}d.$  each and can do one in a quarter of an hour. This woman, a widow with children, seems to be getting work at home as a favour from an employer in a small way of business, who does not habitually put work out.

Dressing-gowns and petticoats are sometimes made in the same factories or workshops as underlinen or as blouses, and sometimes in separate places. We saw for instance the workshop of a woman who designs, cuts and superintends the making of dressing-gowns for a West-end shop, probably for more than one. We did not succeed in seeing the wages book, but were told that the first hand makes 20s. a week and that a good machinist ought to make as much as that. The mistress, a married woman, had a pleasantly humorous turn, cynical but kindly, and we suspect was amused at our visit. Her designs showed great taste and her nine workers looked clean and well fed.

We find  $10d.$  paid to a machinist for a dressing-gown and  $1s. 3d.$  for machining a tea-gown in a comparatively small workshop. In a large actory where cotton is provided,  $7d.$  is paid for machining a dressing-gown, but unless we could compare the articles it is not possible to be certain which of these figures really represents the better

wage. The range of variation in dressing-gowns is almost as great as in blouses. We are inclined to think that in this branch there are women earning, as they themselves say, "good money," and also women very much underpaid.

Petticoats again show considerable diversity of payments. Number 58, of whose work on knickerbockers we have already spoken, makes white petticoats with more or less elaborate frills. In both the patterns shown to the lady who reports the case there is a petticoat complete to be made, and an outer flounce to be added. The petticoat itself is 40 inches long, has seams, side darts, hem and band at waist with draw-strings. No buttons nor buttonholes. The flounce in pattern A consists of a strip of lace, a strip of lawn on which a strip of insertion is stitched, then another strip of lawn, another of insertion, and a third final strip of lawn. At the top the flounce is gathered into a narrow band; this band is placed under a tuck in the skirt and the tuck is stitched down. Tuckings are not made by this worker (a home-worker) but either before or after the work comes to her. In pattern B, after the wide strip has been formed of bands of lawn and of insertion, it is cut into nineteen pieces on the bias. These nineteen bits are then joined together and stitched upon the petticoat and completed by a box-pleated frill three yards long, which the worker makes, pleats and stitches on. For pattern A she is paid 3s. a dozen and takes  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours to make one petticoat. (This strikes us as being quick work.) For pattern B, which con-

tains far more work, only 3s. 6d. per dozen is paid.

A girl making silk underskirts in a wholesale West-end house is paid 5½d. or 6d. each and earns 12s. to 13s. weekly.

Another girl, working for an employer who notoriously pays badly, is engaged in scalloping the frills of petticoats, by machine. She is paid 1½d. for a dozen petticoats that she can do in an hour, and 1¼d. a dozen of a different sort, that she can do in fifty minutes. She pays for needles at ½d. each and has spent as much as 4d. a week for this item, also, occasionally, for wires at 3d. each and spools at 1d. each. Her average earnings (after eighteen months' work) are 6s. to 7s. a week; but she hopes at the first vacancy to be put to machining underclothing, which, she understands, pays better. If, as we have some reason to think, her place of employment is that from which the white petticoats described above are given out, we fear that her hopes will not find much gratification.

A young woman, working with a firm of better standing, machines various moirette and silk petticoats, of medium quality. There is a better kind of work which is done only by older hands. She is paid 5d., 6d. or 7d. for each skirt. Some at 5d. can be done in half an hour, others at the same price may take over an hour. She thinks the payments depend upon what her employer is himself receiving for each order. The fivepenny skirts retail at 10s. 11d. and 12s. 11d. This girl was a learner for three years on time wages and says that at 7s. a week,



in her third year, she was better off than she is now on piece-work, when she generally makes 6s. or 6s. 6d. and has never exceeded 7s. 2d.

Another young woman used to make the following varieties of underskirts: (a) silk, with three frills, seamed and properly hemmed, finished off and pressed; payment 6½d.: (b) moirette skirts; payment 7½d.; retail price 4s. 11d.: (c) moirette skirts; payment 4½d.; retail price 5s. 11d.: (d) silk underskirts, tucked with eighteen tucks; payment 1s. 3d.; retail price 21s.: (e) cotton underskirts, nine tucks, gauged, and seams hand-hemmed, cut on the round at the back. For these the forewoman offered 6½d. each, but the girls went to "the governor" and complained, and 7d. was given. This worker never received more than 12s. in a week, and often only 2s. or 4s. There is much slackness and a good deal of waiting about. A fellow worker, in October 1908, had but 4d. at one week's end. She herself had left six months earlier and gone to work at another trade at 9s. weekly. She complained bitterly of the prices paid for petticoats and the time occupied in making them. At this workshop there was no proper heating, and although the inspector had been told that some arrangement should be made for warming, nothing was done, and the girls were often numb with cold. They used treadle machines, and any person who has worked at a treadle machine in cold weather, even in a well-warmed room, will have some notion of what they must have suffered.

On the whole the making of petticoats seems to

be more often an underpaid than a well-paid branch. The general underclothing trade for women, although neither on the whole quite so ill paid as shirt making nor quite so irregular as dressmaking, is decidedly not well paid and there is considerable evidence that rates have fallen and probably are still falling. We are inclined to think that there are few factories whose wage-books would show an average net wage of 15s. for workers over eighteen, and that the number of women able to gain a regular wage of 20s. or more is fewer than it was ten or fifteen years ago.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CHILDREN'S CLOTHES

CHILDREN'S clothes show much the same characteristics as do the clothes of women, and are made in ways as various. Many underclothing or blouse factories make children's underclothes and pinafores ; boys' shirts and pyjamas are often made in the same factories or workshops as men's shirts, and boys' cloth or tweed garments fall under the general conditions of tailoring, although certain houses devote themselves to the "juvenile" trade only. Girls' frocks seem to be made comparatively seldom on the same premises with women's dresses, but they occasionally share a workshop with babies' clothes or with boys' clothes.

To begin at the first stage ; we have the case of a young girl who is a cutter-out of babies' pelisses in a factory of very good repute. She began as a learner at 3s. a week, and has now risen to 5s. A good cutter may rise to 20s. eventually. Her hours are from 8.30 to 7 ; on Saturdays to 1, and the general conditions of the factory are good.

Another girl presses all kinds of babies' coats and little blouses (probably the serge blouses of sailor frocks and suits). She is paid 1s. a dozen for the



coats, and for babies' blouses 4*d.* a dozen. Of the coats she can press six in an hour, of the blouses about eighteen. There are no charges or deductions. This worker who is about eighteen years old has no parents, but lives with a brother and two sisters in a small house for which they pay 7*s.* 6*d.* weekly. Between them, she says, they manage to get along, but it is always a struggle to make ends meet. She is sure that, counting in slack time, her average wage does not exceed 10*s.*, perhaps scarcely reaches that sum. We have quoted a good many cases of workers who are poor in part because they are old; this family furnishes an example of poverty caused in part by youth. These young people are probably not yet earning quite full wages.

A third worker is a machinist of babies' pelisses. She is a girl of nineteen, one (the youngest we fancy) of a family of five all living at home with a widowed mother, who makes boot-tops, and all at work. This girl began by making ties but, finding the prospects of earning a living in that trade very remote, she became apprenticed to her present employer and when visited was nearing the end of her year. She received at first 2*s.* a week, and rose to 3*s.* 6*d.* At the end of her year she would be paid by the piece, but the precise rates were not ascertained; perhaps the girl did not herself know them.

To compare with these baby-clothes workers we will quote Case 2, that of a tailoress who before marriage made boys' clothes in the factory of a firm that sells almost every kind of garment for boys.

Work was intermittent, but she used to earn about 18s. a week. From one or two statements made to us we are inclined to believe that the rates paid by this firm are now lower, but that they are higher than those paid by certain rival firms in the same line of trade.

Girls' frocks are made under very varying conditions and at very different rates of pay. One woman whom we visited had worked at very good West-end houses where she earned from 16s. to 20s. a week. She made "misses'" and children's frocks in different styles, of muslin or voile, with tucks and with lace edgings and insertions. This woman is now approaching sixty and learned her trade forty years ago in a provincial town; as improver in London she received 10s. a week; as assistant 15s.; and "managed a room" at a wage of 20s. In the last place where she worked—a wholesale house in the West-end—there was a system of speeding-up which pressed hardly upon the workers. Each had a book "which had to show a profit of 8s. weekly from 16s. to 24s.," a cryptic statement which would almost seem to imply that each worker was expected to do for 16s. an amount of work for which the middleman would get 24s. This she characterised as "sweating work." Now she is too old to get employed in workrooms, though not yet old enough to receive Poor Law Relief. She is, however, quite fit, still, to do a day's work and has been attempting for the last six months to establish a little private connection. She pays 1s. 6d. a week for her single room and

1s. 6d. for the hire of her machine, but cannot keep up the payments and expects to lose it. Hers is a case for a little private help and especially for a few private orders.

Two other workshop hands, both living and working in a somewhat outlying district, make babies' frocks. One who has only just begun receives 4s. 6d. a week and makes silk frocks with tucks and insertions. Her hours, 9 to 7, are comparatively short.

The other girl has worked for two middlewomen. At the first place she smocked frocks, and received 3d. for smocking front and sleeves when the frock was not of silk, and 6d. when it was. The largest sum she ever earned in a week at this work was 8s. 1½d. She now machines mantles and coats at a regular weekly wage of 5s. and says that this pays her better.

It happens that, although we know a great deal of juvenile work to be done by home-workers, our home-work cases in this department are comparatively few. Among them we may note that of Mrs. B. who, besides making petticoats and aprons, used to make pinafores at 6d. and 9d. a dozen for a middleman. She could make three or four in an hour. This woman has a husband in regular work and two children, and has given up this work, which she never did regularly. By working very long hours it would have been possible to earn 8s. or 9s. weekly ; not more.

Another home-worker was an exceedingly intelligent woman whose father had been employed for



many years by one firm and had contributed to a provident society. His firm gave up business ; he found himself too old to obtain employment elsewhere and became unable to keep up his payments to his society, from which accordingly he did not receive a penny. His daughter bought material and made up children's clothes which her father hawked in the street. When he did not succeed in selling she of course had no money to buy fresh materials. She then took work from a City firm, with a well-known name, which conceals itself behind advertisements of parcels of "home-made" baby clothes to be sold for a guinea. Various addresses—sometimes to "Nurse" A. or B. are given and the possible buyer is led to suppose that these are the clothes prepared by some disappointed mother for an infant that has not lived. As a matter of fact however these clothes are given out in dozens to be made at home by underpaid women. For long robes with two tucks, a little bodice edged and trimmed with embroidery, drawn up at the waist and neck by strings, and having little sleeves also edged with embroidery, she receives 2*s.* a dozen ; for long nightgowns with sleeves 1*s.* 6*d.* a dozen ; for long petticoats without sleeves 1*s.* a dozen ; for short petticoats 9*d.* a dozen. At these rates she could hardly feed her father and herself, she became short of clothes, their rent fell into arrears. Fortunately their case came under the notice of a gentleman who was able and willing to give a little help. They are now once more living in some approach to comfort, and when last seen by one of us the daughter was just about to begin

work for another firm of which she hoped better things.

Another woman whose case is a hard one has worked for fifteen years for a good West-end firm where she made lace fichus, caps, &c., and also often went out to study and copy models in West-end shops. She used to earn 16s. to 18s. and had not much slack time. Her employer failed and she being now old could not get work elsewhere. She now makes babies' frocks of lengths of stuff which she buys cheap in the market, pieces together, and sells to her neighbours. "They don't mind," she says, "how many joins there are." She is a very tidy, clean woman though evidently very poor.

Among the West Ham cases there are a good many of women doing juvenile work at home. In one of these two women live and work together making "specials" in baby-linen entirely by hand. They have been employed by the same firm for nineteen years and their average weekly earnings, together, are from £1 10s. to £2 5s. They pay 7s. rent and one of them has an income of a few shillings weekly left her by her parents. They work eight hours a day for five days a week and expend from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. a week on cotton, besides 1s. 4d. a week on fares. When they are very busy indeed the niece of one of them comes to help and is paid 5s. 6d. for four days.

A married woman, whose husband earned 20s. a week at a good trade, machined trousers of different kinds, among them boys' knickerbockers, at 1s. 3d. a dozen. She provided cotton, which cost 6d.

weekly. She reported that the firm for which she worked liked married women to do about 2s. worth of work a day, and were not pleased if a woman did more. Her own average over 20 weeks was 6s. 2½d.

A single woman who formerly worked indoors was machining boys' jackets and knickerbockers at home for a middleman. For plain knickerbockers she received 9d. per dozen; for those with elastic at the knee, 1s. 2d. or 1s. 3d.; and for those with strap buckles, 1s. 9d. a dozen; for jackets 2s. 6d. She provided cotton, and averaged 7s. a week. The middleman's rates were the same as those of a factory which gave out work.

We might multiply cases of this sort; but we should only be repeating facts of the kind that have been presented already in previous chapters.

The greater part of children's clothing follows the lines of different sections of adult clothing. Baby linen, perhaps, tends to form a separate department; and in regard to baby linen we find particularly gross examples of underpayment. These examples, however, appear to emanate from one employer, and it ought to be possible to put an end to his peculiar and deleterious activities.



## CHAPTER IX

### HOURS, WAGES AND CONDITIONS

WE have now presented a survey of the three trades which we set out to investigate ; and looking back upon our assemblage of facts, the word that rises in our minds is : chaos. As far as we can see the chief characteristic of these trades is an absence of uniformity. In no two factories is there an identity of conditions. In very few is there parity of payments. Over by far the greater part of the field there is no standard wage and hardly even a current wage. Individualism run wild, a lack of co-ordination, a welter of persons all striving separately, this is the spectacle presented.

In the bespoke branch of tailoring, indeed, there exists something like a standard wage : the " log " of the Almalgamated Society of Tailors ; and in the higher walks of the bespoke branch of dressmaking, there are traces of a customary wage for " full hands " that once was current but that now is being broken down. In the other branches of these trades and in all branches of the underclothing trade we can find nothing like a standard or even a current wage.

In the " West-end tailoring " trade, women are

as a rule paid 4s. to 5s. for a day's work ; but the day itself is longer than in most industries. 8 to 8 on five days and 8 to 4 on one day make up the tailoress's week ; and in the busy season overtime is not infrequent. But the season extends over not more than half the year and during much of the other half, slackness deepens into unemployment. We doubt whether the average wage of the first class tailoress, taking the year through, often exceeds 15s. weekly. Waistcoat makers, indeed, who are almost all women, are rather better off. Probably, as a class, waistcoat makers are the best paid group of workers with the needle. There must be an appreciable total of waistcoat makers whose average wage allowing for slack times is not less than from 18s. to 20s. ; and some individuals who can reckon upon an average of over 20s. These are the millionaires of women's industry—persons who actually earn enough to house, feed and clothe themselves healthily, and have a small sum in hand after the necessities of life have been provided.

The upper sections of the dressmaking trade show very similar general conditions but less uniformity. The 18s. that used to be a full hand's regular rate is often now replaced by 16s., and that in some of the most fashionable houses. On the other hand there are employers who habitually pay full hands more than 18s. a week.

Bodice hands throughout the trade rank a little higher than skirt hands ; but blouse makers, even of the highest class, appear to be generally worse paid

than either. The blouse-making department and some parts of the wholesale branch make up the very badly paid section of the dressmaking trade, and this statement is true in regard to indoor workers as well as outdoor workers.

Of the underclothing trade the well paid section is very small; but (except in shirt-making) the general level strikes us as slightly better than in blouse-making. Petticoats however are very often paid for at rates extremely low, considering the amount of work in them. As to shirt-making, there is a section, comparatively very small, of fairly well paid work; but the general level is deplorable.

In the numerous factories and even more numerous workshops engaged all over London in the production of ready-made clothing (coats, trousers, waistcoats, costumes, blouses, mantles, children's frocks, shirts, undergarments, aprons, pinafores, dressing-gowns, silk underskirts, &c.) examples may be found of wages on every level from 20s. or even 21s. weekly down to 5s. or 4s. The methods and distribution of work vary surprisingly in different places, and the real wage received is greatly affected by the degree of organising and administrative ability that may happen to be possessed by the person in command. It is a common thing for groups of workers employed in different rooms of the same factory, doing precisely the same work under identical external conditions and at the same piece-work rates, to show weekly general averages one of which will be always steadily larger than the other.

Factory work tends to division of labour and to



the specialisation of each worker's industry: the baster, the "maker up," the machinist of coat fronts, or of sleeves or of bodies, the presser, the finisher, the buttonhole machinist, all tend to become separate hands. This tendency is not so marked in ready-made costumes, although the divisions of "bodice hand" and "skirt hand" are perceptible. In mantles, generally, in children's suits and frocks and in most parts of underclothing, the division has not gone much beyond those of machinist, finisher, buttonhole machinist and presser; and even these functions are sometimes merged in one individual.

Blouse factories as a rule pay badly. Underclothing factories, as far as we can judge, seem almost universally to pay at lower rates than was the case some few years ago; we believe that in this branch the competition of Ireland has been severely felt and that it grows increasingly difficult for any London employer to pay well.

In all the trades, both machining and finishing are done by home workers, and on the whole the machinists are slightly better paid—although not nearly better enough to cover the 1s. 6d. or 1s. weekly that most of them pay for hire-purchase of a machine. A good many home workers make the whole article (or all of it except the buttonholes, which are machined). A comparison of the pay of home workers with that of indoor workers is exceedingly difficult. In most cases their net wage is less; yet there are home workers whose earnings exceed those of many factory workers in the same branch, and that without longer hours of work.

The issue of course is confused—even beyond the general confusion of the whole case—by the presence in the home-working group of a large number of women whose industrial employment is only partial : mothers who work while their children are at school or after they are in bed ; old women who “ help a little ” in the work of a daughter or of a niece. The prevalent rate of payment—in so far as such a rate exists at all—can obviously only be deduced from the earnings of women who follow their occupation as a regular trade. When we endeavour to generalise upon the earnings of such women, however, we find ourselves confronted by the curious fact that the woman who depends upon her labour is apt to earn less by the hour (sometimes even at the same occupation and at the same rates) than the woman who could afford not to work at all. So far is it from being true, as the ignorant are fond of declaring, that the wife of the man in good work lowers rates by working, that the fact appears to be the precise contrary ; the woman who can afford to “ stand out ” is the very woman who resists under payment.\* But by no means all married homeworkers can

\* The London Branch of the Christian Social Union inquired into 378 cases of the employment of women after child-birth, and divided the reasons for the women's working into nine classes—*i.e.*, low wages of husband ; irregular work ; short time ; out of work ; vicious husband ; invalid husband ; widow ; no apparent reason ; not stated. Subtracting the total (59) of the “ not stated ” column, it appears that out of 319, 99, or almost a third of the whole number, worked because the wages of the husband were low, and only 46 because the husband was out of work. The 42 who worked for “ no apparent reason ” may perhaps be held to represent the Home Work Committee's third class.

afford to make resistance. The majority of them do not fall into any of the three categories into which the Report of the Select Committee on Home Work divides them. According to that Report, persons who undertake work for others and do it in their own homes . . . consist chiefly of three classes : (i) Single women, widows, wives deserted by or separated from their husbands, and wives whose husbands are ill or unable to work. . . . (ii) Wives who obtain work when their husbands are out of employment. . . . (iii) Wives and daughters of men in regular employment, who wish to increase the family income. They usually select pleasant work and do not ordinarily work very long hours." The Committee's third class evidently represents the wives and daughters of men whose regular earnings suffice to support their families. But there is a fourth and very large group of married home workers whose existence, although it forces itself on the attention of most inquirers, seems to have escaped the observation of the Select Committee: the group formed by the wives of men who although in regular work do not receive a wage upon which it is possible to support a wife and children. To this group belong the larger number of married women visited in the course of this inquiry.\* There are many occupations of men for which the usual

\* The Women's Industrial Council is, at the time of writing, engaged in an inquiry on a considerable scale into the work of married women. Such information as has already been received and tabulated shows a marked preponderance of women whose reason for working is the inadequacy of the husband's wage for the support of the family.



wage is little more than large enough to keep the man himself—20s. to 24s. is the rate of pay, for instance, of hundreds of carmen. In some other callings, apparently better paid, the man's inevitable expenses run high. Omnibus men and tram men, for instance, are engaged for long hours at a distance from their homes and must if they are to keep fit for prolonged labour in the open air buy themselves substantial meals. The wife of such a man is always compelled to add to the income, and the more children she has the greater is the necessity for her to become a bread-winner, a painful truth which no one would suspect from the Committee's Report.

In the matter of hours the tailoring trade alone shows any uniformity. In the upper branches of that trade the working week is the longest permitted by the law; and the lower branches show the influence of this bad example. The working hours of tailoring factories and workshops seem generally rather longer than those of factories and workshops in other trades. Perhaps the majority of tailoring workshops throughout London begin working at 8 A.M., and continue until 8 P.M., on five days a week, and until four on Saturdays. Factory hours are generally half an hour shorter at one end or the other, or at both. Dressmakers seldom work so long; 9 or even 9.30 are not unusual hours for beginning and 7.30 or 7 are very customary times for ceasing work. Factories nearly always begin before 9 in the morning, whether the work performed in them belongs to the dressmaking or to the underclothing trade.

The hours of home workers are not regulated by law and are in fact variable in an extreme degree. Some home workers work only three, four or five days a week ; some only a few hours daily ; some only in spurts of a few days or weeks ; some only early in the morning and again late in the evening ; some work regularly according to the usual factory times, and some work up to the very limit of human endurance.

The conditions amid which work is carried on differ extremely. There are factories in which every point of space, sanitation, light, air and warmth, facilities for washing, and for the cooking of meals and comfort of meal-room are satisfactory ; there are many others in which some one or two of these details will be far from satisfactory ; and there are a few in which every possible condition not fixed by law is unsatisfactory.

Almost every factory and workshop has its own tone and standards. It is certain that in a considerable number the moral tone is low ; unseemly jests, swearing and indecent conversation will be common in them, and any girls of delicacy and refinement will suffer horribly from their surroundings. In other places the whole spirit will be, in the true sense of that much abused word, respectable. Some workplaces, again, are "rowdy" ; the girls, though perhaps industrious, companionable, and in fundamentals well-conducted, will be loud talkers, loud laughers, will sing, shriek and swagger in the streets, and will be always ready to indulge in horseplay. Much depends upon the employer, even

more upon the foreman or forewoman, most of all upon the worker of most initiative and vitality. Before putting a girl into any particular workplace, parents or other persons interested in her welfare would do wisely to make sure of its moral atmosphere; upon the nature of that may often depend the whole character of the girl's future.

For a single woman the prospect in most departments of these trades—we believe in most departments of nearly all trades—is much the same. If she is really competent and skilled she may hope as she approaches thirty to attain a wage, in the West-end, of 18s. to 20s.; in the East-end and the outer districts, of 16s. to 18s. At about forty-five to fifty she will receive from 1s. to 2s. less. From fifty onward her foothold becomes excessively precarious and if she loses her place she has no hope of getting another, though she will probably be still a good worker. Until she is sixty she cannot get Poor Law Relief. During the intervening years she generally attempts to gather together some little private connection, perhaps appeals to the Charity Organisation Society, and undergoes great hardship and privation. After sixty if she is fortunate enough to live in a district where out-relief is given, some slight alleviation is experienced. The old woman still goes often cold and hungry, but the daily dread of being left homeless, because of inability to pay her rent, ceases. Solitary, "keeping herself to herself," she lives out her remnant of life, happy if she can die in her own poor room and not in the workhouse infirmary.



Although the variations as between individual workers and between individual workplaces are great in almost every branch of all three trades, yet there are certain general features common to all three. In all, wages tend to decrease as we travel eastward and outward ; in all, the worst cases of under payment are to be found in outlying districts. In all, irregularity is most marked in the West-end ; in all, the happiest average appears to occur at the level where wages are not at the highest but where irregularity, too, tends to be considerably less. In all the trades, however, absolute regularity of work is a very rare exception. In all we find considerable variations of payment for practically the same work. Some middlemen pay better than some factories. We do not find that marked difference existing between the real wages of power machinists and treadle machinists, or of treadle machinists and hand workers, which theoretically we should expect to find. The differences of payment seem, as far as we can judge, to depend generally far more upon the personality of the employer, or sometimes of the employer's subordinates, than upon any difference in the quality or nature of the work. At the same time there are instances in which the employer regulates his payment to his workers in proportion to the payment that he is, himself, to receive.

In regard to some articles the very low price at which they are retailed must make it difficult for employers to pay their makers properly. Blouses offered at 1s. 6d. to 2s. are probably in this case. Unfortunately it is certain that many workers

are not, in fact, at all better paid when they are engaged in making expensive articles. To receive  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  for making a blouse in half an hour is not more unprofitable than to receive  $9d.$  for making a blouse in three hours. More than one worker has told us that "the cheap work pays better." This fact seems largely to invalidate the remark of the Select Committee on Home Work, who in their report say that: "Unless the price at which these articles" (baby linen, and ladies' blouses and underclothing) "are sold to the wives and daughters of the better-paid working men and small middle-class people is low, those who would otherwise be purchasers will buy the materials and make the articles at home." While it is true that a certain degree of cheapness may preclude the possibility of a proper payment to labour, it is emphatically not true in general that the payment to labour in these trades is related to the selling price of the completed article, nor is it, we believe, true that an endeavour to produce cheaply has been the principal cause of low wages. In the blouse trade (and also to some extent in the underclothing trade) we are of opinion that the rapacity of two or three employers has been the primary cause of nearly all the poverty and misery prevailing. In the blouse trade we could, did the express conditions of our inquiry not forbid the publication of names, point out two firms who share a large proportion of the guilt. There are also, as readers of these pages and of the tabulations at the end of this volume may see for themselves, firms who resist the competition created by these

unscrupulous rivals. How severe their struggle is we cannot judge, but we believe it to be often severe ; and we are glad to take this occasion of expressing our esteem and admiration for the employer who, amid the general confusion, seriously endeavours to keep his employees comparatively prosperous and comfortable. Employers of this type have been quietly, for years, doing a great and unrecognised public service. To them, rather than to those of us who have urged and agitated, is it due that there are still women in the clothing trades able to live upon their own wages and to taste some of the better pleasures of life.



## CHAPTER X

### RENTS AND HOUSING

LABOUR, like water, tends to gather into pools. In London, the largest pool—one that almost assumes the character of a lake—covers what we call vaguely “the East-end.” Hoxton, Hackney, Bermondsey, Walworth and many an outlying district such as Leytonstone, Clapton, and Shepherd’s Bush, hold pools of varying dimensions. In Soho is another pond, not so extensive, but deep. And everywhere, all over London, far out to the encircling fringe where mean, little, cheap new houses press in upon the old villages and upon the fields, lie little scattered puddles, fertilising drops of labour, helping to fructify various harvests. Wherever the pool grows large, rents begin to rise; wherever it is restrained by enclosing banks, rents rise exorbitantly, as may be seen in Soho.

Till between twenty and thirty years ago, Soho was an unbroken district with a marked character of its own. No main thoroughfare ran through it; it was compact, picturesque, inhabited by a population largely foreign, and its ground plan was delightfully intricate. To know one’s way in Soho was in those days to have mastered a complicated problem,

and the uninitiated wanderer was exposed, if he, too

“lost his way  
Near Poland Street, Soho,”

to the fate of Sir W. S. Gilbert’s policeman, who

“in the tangle of his task  
Got more and more involved,”

and continued to tread

“his self made beats  
Through Newport—Gerrard—Bear—  
Greek—Rupert—Frith—Dean—Poland—Streets  
And into Golden Square.”

But Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road were cut ruthlessly through the heart of the labyrinth. Among the dwellings that then vanished were not a few of historic and architectural value, and some also that were no longer fit for human habitation. Persons who for years had dwelt in the centre of remote old-fashioned streets; found themselves suddenly next door but one to a tide of traffic. The homogeneity of Soho was destroyed; bits of the district lie stranded like Denmark Street, and a section of Old Compton Street on the wrong side of Charing Cross Road, while Shaftesbury Avenue cuts off uneven lengths from Wardour Street, Dean Street and their parallels. Much demolition and rebuilding have taken place. That beautiful example of later Stuart and early Georgian building, Golden Square, has been entirely transformed, hardly an old house now remaining; Wardour Street is being eaten up by blocks of flats; Marshall Street—the sanitary condition of some part of which

was appalling—has been or is being rebuilt from end to end; half one side of Meard Street is already new, high and red.

For many years past the district has been inhabited by men working at home or of late years at “sittings” in workshops, for the fashionable tailors of the West-end. The need of taking work to and fro, perhaps several times a day, obliged them to work within easy distance of their employers’ premises, and where they worked they lived. Many of them do so still but no small number have moved their homes and now only work in Soho. Of these emigrating families a considerable proportion have gone to the limit of the Central London Tube and dwell in Shepherd’s Bush, a district rapidly coming to be inhabited by working people.

In Soho itself some workers still live in fine old residences which, when they have been kept in decent repair, are still sound; oak stairs, solid balustrades and durable, though discoloured floor boards, bear witness to the good workmanship of the men who two hundred years ago built these houses for periwigged fine gentlemen. But good as the workmanship was and spacious as are many of the rooms, the houses are, naturally enough, ill-adapted for letting out in separate apartments. The flats which are superseding them are far more conveniently arranged, but the rooms of these are in many cases mere boxes and in none that we have visited have we found those wide spaces of yard or quadrangle that are to be seen in many newer districts.

The rent of a single room in the older houses will



often run to over £20 per annum ; and many working tailors are paying more than £50 a year for three or four rooms. In the flats rents run from 11s. 6d. to 13s. for three rooms and a scullery. This high cost of housing has been the main reason why so many tailors have taken their families farther afield. One man told us that he paid 7s. 6d. for a comfortable little house with some garden to it. His own fares now come to 4d. a day ; his meals cost more because he cannot get them at home and he has to pay extra for workshop rent, so that his actual saving, if any, must be minute, while his personal fatigues are probably greater. The gain is in the better health and greater comfort of wife and children, and in the greater quiet and airiness of the family's sleeping quarters.

In the East-end rents are high, and the complaint, so frequently heard, that alien competition has aggravated their rise, is probably well founded. The increased demand for shelter, whatever the nationality of those who make the demand, must tend to such an effect. A whole house in the East-end may cost over £50 per annum (of course paid weekly) and in that case will almost certainly be partly let off. In an extremely uninviting street off Commercial Road we visited a middleman whose workroom was built out at the back across an ill-paved yard. In the yard pools of dirty water were lying, cats and chickens were walking about, and close to the door of the workroom were two water closets, one for men and one for women, separate as the law directs, but absolutely contiguous, so that

while the letter of the regulation was observed, that privacy which is its object was entirely disregarded. The house, itself ill-built from the beginning, was in bad repair and the street in which it was situated enjoys no good reputation. Yet the rental of this singularly undesirable abode (which may have contained six rooms, none large) was 28*s.* a week. We have a case of a fairly comfortable house in Stepney at 15*s.* 6*d.* In both of these cases part of the house is underlet. One room, occupied by three persons,\* in a street off Commercial Road, costs 3*s.* 6*d.* In a block of buildings not far from the Mint a tenement, containing we believe three rooms and a scullery, lets at 5*s.* 1*d.* For one room in the same block a woman with two children pays 3*s.* 0½*d.* In Bow we find a family of ten lodged for 6*s.*; these are very poor people; in St. George's-in-the-East a family of nine are paying 6*s.* 6*d.* In one room of the same district a mother and two children of school age live in one room at a rent of 4*s.* A family of eight persons, in great poverty, pay 4*s.* for lodgings in a Shoreditch court. A woman with one child pays 4*s.* 6*d.* in Spitalfields. Four people in Bethnal Green pay 6*s.* 6*d.* for two rooms; and in the same district a family of six is lodged for 6*s.*—very poorly. Four people are paying 6*s.* 6*d.* in a Hoxton street for part of a house. In Dalston four people have a house at 17*s.* 6*d.*, but let off rooms. Two people in the same district are housed (comfortably) at 8*s.* 3*s.* is being paid for one room

\* Of the persons reckoned, some are often children, sometimes infants.

in a very low part of Kingsland, and the room is occupied by two persons. In a poor street of Lower Clapton another two persons are paying precisely the same rate for one room ; while not far away three persons pay 9*s.* for a comfortable, well-kept house of six rooms. On the South side of the Thames we find 8*s.* for lodging a family of four comfortably ; close by a family of nine pay 15*s.* for a house, and let off rooms to the value of 8*s.* With these figures we may compare some from the Western and West Central districts. Two rooms near Lisson Grove are let at 7*s.* 6*d.* ; three in a good old Soho house at 17*s.* 6*d.*—a very low rent for the district on account of the man being an old tenant. Two girls share a very poor room in a similar but dilapidated house and pay 4*s.*, while an old woman occupies two, pays 8*s.*, and has a young relative living with her. Some young married people occupy a flat between Tottenham Court Road and Regent Street and pay 13*s.* for three rooms and a scullery. They formerly paid 10*s.* for a whole house at Tottenham that had a garden, but the husband's fares amounted to 10*d.* a day, or 5*s.* a week. This family has been in New York and the wife thinks that food and housing were no dearer there in proportion to wages and were much more comfortable. In three different streets off Tottenham Court Road we find one person paying 12*s.* for two rooms ; three persons inhabiting one room at 7*s.* ; and a family of four paying 22*s.* for four rooms. We have a few cases of solitary women paying in various districts 3*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.*, 2*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* for a



single room and one instance of an elderly single woman who pays only 1s. 6d. Oddly enough she is living not in a cheap neighbourhood but almost at the point where the E.C., W.C. and N.W. postal districts join.

The average Londoner has, we believe, very little idea of the way in which the old villages of the outer ring are being transformed into slums of a peculiarly hopeless character. If we follow any of the tram lines radiating from London into the country we shall find very similar conditions. To speak of the northern side only of the river, Leytonstone, Clapton, Stoke Newington, Finsbury Park, Edmonton, Tottenham, to some extent Finchley, and Acton present features of the same kind. We pass out of London through a stretch of streets more or less sordid, but not horribly poverty stricken, and reach the outskirts of an old village with fine residences; then comes the old High Street in process of lamentable transformation; then more residences; then the country. To one such district among others, our inquiry carried us more than once. It was a fine morning in early summer when, furnished with a sheaf of addresses, we made our first visit. We were struck as we advanced along the main road by the number of fine old buildings: almshouses and dwellings of the Queen Anne country house type, some of them still possessing surrounding or adjacent gardens. These aristocratic survivals of bygone days are sandwiched between garish modern shops with plate glass windows, and a step farther on stand genuine village shops whose

low, tiled roofs date back some two or three hundred years. The names too have an Arcadian flavour. We noted The Dial House, built of old red brick, with a charming sundial dated 1691, and Pond House, an Elizabethan Manor formerly surrounded by gardens and outbuildings now used by the present occupier as stores for business purposes. Part of the grounds on the other side of a fine old brick wall—a kitchen garden doubtless—is let as stabling for waggons. There is a legend of a subterranean passage connecting this house with a royal residence at some distance.

Here, and again another day, when we visited a historic abode in one of the old streets and a historic grave near the old church, with its wonderful brasses, we saw enough to convince us that the district offered a happy hunting-ground to the archæologist, and to make us long that these interesting survivals should receive loving record with pen and camera before it becomes too late. Even now the speculative builder is at their doors, and within a few steps lies a new area to which our addresses guided us and in which he has wrought according to his kind. With regret we turned aside from a delightful row of old houses ending in what must have been the outbuildings of one that still possesses stone images on each side of its beautiful grille, and found ourselves suddenly in a neighbourhood of mean narrow streets—line upon line of two-storeyed houses built of pale brick and roofed with slate. The yet unfinished ends of many of these streets ran out into green fields still used as we saw,

in some cases, for cricket and playgrounds ; but ominous boards bearing such words as : " This Land for Sale," " For building purposes," showed that at no distant date these too will be built over. These outlets for air and recreation will vanish, and the country will recede further while giant London comes creeping on like some maleficent monster devouring more and more acres of open space, shutting off more and more groups of toilers from natural and simple pleasures, from open sky and green fields. And as we looked and sighed we reflected that this was but a sample ; and that precisely such congeries as this were springing up in one area after another. Let any reader dismount, turn aside from the main arteries, look for himself, and observe the genesis of a slum. For already these new streets have the essential slum characteristics and are only waiting for time and dirt to give the proper colouring to the picture. In design indeed these little ugly houses are not inconvenient ; each has a tiny patch of ground before it, a slightly larger patch behind ; kitchens and sculleries are well planned—for the needs of one family. The landlord is, in some cases at least, neither grasping nor ill meaning, and the rent of 7*s.* or 7*s.* 6*d.* for six rooms, two of which are large, is by no means exorbitant. But it has not occurred to these landlords to prohibit sub-letting, and the results of this omission have been deplorable. Persons of the class for which, in the well-founded opinion of Dr. Watts, Satan provides occupation, have seized the opportunity offered, and in many of these houses



every room had its separate tenants. The exteriors betrayed the character of the inhabitants; in some cases windows were encrusted with the dirt of weeks and months, doorsteps were uncleaned, and the patch that should have been a front garden bare and neglected. A small minority, indeed, exhibited clean curtains, bright door-knobs and a clear pathway; but at many of the doors slovenly women stood, gossiping, at twelve in the day; as usual where the clothes of mothers are torn and dirty, the clothes of the children, just coming home from school, were untidy rags and the heads of mothers and children alike displayed little familiarity with combs and brushes. Wherever we found decent people (and those who work are decent everywhere) they complained bitterly of their environment. "I can't," said one superior woman, "let my children go out to play with such as those." Her children, therefore, were confined to the exiguous back garden. Even by going to the same school, she declares, the children are infected by bad language and by various resultants of uncleanness. Many people who talk glibly of "the poor" as of one homogeneous group fail to recognise how sharply divided are the social classes and how immensely various the standards of life. Large numbers of working-class parents are quite as much distressed as any reader of these lines could be at the idea of a cherished child's associating with children whose manners are low and whose persons and personal habits are dirty. Parents of this kind will not remain where their children are daily exposed to see and hear—as we

saw and heard that day in these streets not yet ten years old—men and women drunk before midday, and speech as foul as could be found in the lowest court of the often-maligned East-end. Thus do districts fall lower and lower and a fresh colony of dirt, disease and vicious idleness is formed. To clear out at considerable public expense old slum areas, around and in which, after all, reformatory agencies have, in the course of years, nearly always established themselves, and at the same time to permit the creation of fresh slums in new areas, at present clean and healthy but, naturally, unprovided with such agencies, is surely a course only worthy of the daughters of Danaus. The difficulties of prevention grow with each passing year into the far greater difficulty of purification; and through all the passing years children of the nation are growing up into almost inevitable deterioration. Few public duties face the modern legislator more insistently than that of ensuring that the greater London fast developing around us shall become, we will not say worthy of the world's largest and wealthiest city, but at least fit for decent workers to live in, and such as to afford to the children of decent workers a reasonable chance of growing up to healthy and honourable maturity.

## CHAPTER XI

### HOW THE TRADES ARE LEARNED

FORMERLY, as we all know, it was usual for young people to learn their trades by being apprenticed to some employer. Quaint and curious are the old indentures in which the master engages to teach the aspirant the "art and craft" of any particular calling, while the youth engages to conceal the trade secrets of his master and generally to pursue a quite inhumanly perfect course of conduct. In those days the master not only taught, but also boarded and lodged his apprentices—a fact often not sufficiently taken into account by persons who discuss the prevalent decay of apprenticeship. "Living in," although the system has many and grave drawbacks, did enable poor parents to get their children taught without bearing meanwhile the burden of their maintenance. A premium, it is true, had to be paid in the first instance, but its total was seldom equivalent to more than, even if to as much as, one year's board and lodging out of the three or five covered by the indentures. As, however, the conditions of trade changed, as rents increased and workroom space became more and more valuable, apprentices were no longer lodged



in the house, and the poorest parents were thus debarred from apprenticing their children. A very great decline in apprenticeship soon became apparent; applicants ceased to present themselves for the funds of the many old apprenticeship charities and these, in a great number of cases, were diverted to other purposes. But, although some employers, in consequence of the rush of modern business did really not wish to have learners in their workrooms, others needed and wished for them, and not comprehending why they no longer presented themselves, talked of the slackness of the present generation, the indifference of parents, the laziness of working people, and so forth.

Parents being unable, when they had to support their children, to let them spend a long unpaid period in learning, were obliged to let them instead, pay their footing by services, and acquire what knowledge they could in odd moments. Thus arose the "trotter" who for a year or two does little more than run errands and after that "picks up" her trade. "Trotting," *i.e.*, purchasing or matching materials in various shops as well as carrying home finished work, is no doubt an essential part of a workshop's activity, and a girl who is occupied in this function acquires a knowledge of materials, of prices, and also of the character of various shops which is likely to be of use to her. But she does not acquire her trade. Therefore no girl ought to be kept longer than six months at the outside at this occupation—an occupation, it may be remarked, extremely destructive to shoe-leather. At the end

of the six months an employer should be bound to see that real instruction is imparted, and although press of work may and in fact does, in the season, leave no moment free for teaching learners, the slack time affords plenty of leisure.

Learners should be taken on at the opening of the season, say, just after Easter, and by the middle or end of July—when there is really little or no demand upon the services of a trotter—should undergo a steady course of training. By the recurrence of the busy winter season a girl should have become useful in the workroom. If she is a tailoress she should now be able to fell in linings—though perhaps rather slowly; if a dressmaker, to sew on hooks, make loops, sew on braids, overcast seams and also to bone properly (as many professed dressmakers never learn to do). At this time another beginner might, if required, come in as “trotter” while the first learner, in the slack early spring season, would be relieved from practising upon hooks and eyes, &c., and would advance to further stages. But it is clear that such arrangements do not suit all employers, and that more training, and more systematic training, is desirable. This is provided (in a very small measure, at present) in trade schools. The trade schools for girls in London are admirable; they have but one defect: they are too few. As one example we may speak of those at the Borough Polytechnic. There girls learn, from teachers who have themselves been workers, the trades of waistcoat making, dress-making and upholstery. They work at the trades

in the mornings, and in the afternoon they carry forward their general education. As in the admirable Paris schools, every pupil is taught to draw. They also receive instruction in English, in industrial history, and in branches of arithmetic that will be useful in their trade. The great truth has been apprehended by those who framed this enlightened curriculum that there are two sides to the development of a really good worker—general intelligence is no less necessary than special training. Nor are the claims of bodily health forgotten. Physical exercise forms a part of the course, and the alert, healthy appearance of the pupils shows how much advantage they derive from this training. We are told that in many instances the health of the girls shows a marked improvement during the two or three years of the course. But, admirable as are all these provisions, they would not alone suffice to train workers acceptable to the modern employer. The girls might conceivably be intelligent, might have learned every branch of their work quite perfectly, but might not have attained that promptness and self-reliance, that readiness of “attack” which are as necessary in a workroom as in an orchestra; and the absence of which means leakage of time and diminution of output. There has been instituted, therefore, the “advisory committee,” composed of trade experts. Employers of labour, managers, foremen and forewomen actually engaged in the business, form this committee; and these busy people are found ready to devote regularly some hours of their busy lives to careful inspection and criticism of the



school work. Not only the standard but the rapidity of the pupil's achievement is passed in review, and the authorities of the school learn what are the points most prized in the actual market. As yet these schools and others very similar are young, and the number of pupils who have passed into trade life is not great. As far as experience yet goes, it appears that the girls get good places and give satisfaction ; how far they tend to rise in their callings remains to be seen. One thing however is absolutely certain ; their lives are worth more to themselves, their work lies clear before them, and they have some comprehension of their own place in the developing industry of the world. Also they have all been taught not one branch only of their trade, but the whole trade ; specialisation, if it comes, as it almost always must, comes at the proper time, not in learning, that is, but in practice.

Such training as this does provide a valuable substitute for the old method of apprenticeship, but further development is needed in several directions. Some girls have scholarships which help to cover the expenses of their maintenance ; but these are the minority, and without some sort of maintenance grant the poorest parents cannot put their girls into these schools. Surely the provision of such grants truly represents in modern life the aims of those pious Londoners who gave or bequeathed funds for apprenticing girls. Some of these funds are used to excellent purpose by various apprenticeship committees and by the London County Council ; but fifty times as much money could be used, with great

advantage, in enabling the children of London's citizens to become trained and wealth-producing workers; and great efforts ought to be made to draw back into this channel the incomes of any old apprenticeship charities that have been diverted to purposes either of secondary education or of any other good work not designed by the original founders.

And here, we venture to suggest, is presented that rare opportunity, an opening for harmless individual benevolence. Our ancestors were fond of endowing secondary education, and it seems likely that money enough has been devoted in this manner to give secondary education to every highly talented but impecunious child in our country. But technical education, that younger sister so lately grown up, is comparatively speaking a dowerless maiden, and of such dower as was assigned her by her forbears, her grasping elder has secured no little share. The time has surely come for a new generation of pious founders who will make endowments for scholars in industry. In London alone, many children can never hope to attend a trade school unless 5s. a week can be forthcoming from some source or another towards their maintenance. Now 5s. a week is £13 a year; and three times £13 is £39. An endowment of £40 a year therefore would suffice for one girl's training. An income of £120 would put a fresh girl each year into the schools and keep three always learning. When we reflect upon the very large sums annually spent and bequeathed for charitable purposes, we find ourselves, we must confess, looking a little grudgingly at some of the channels into which that

stream of benevolence flows, and desiring very earnestly to divert some of it towards the industrial equipment of London's very many intelligent children, now destined to grow dulled and hopeless in a monotonous round of unskilled and uncomprehending labour.

While fully recognising that superior efficiency would not, if it became practically universal, continue, in a world of unlimited competition, to command good payment, we submit that for a long time to come the demand for a high grade of skill is likely to exceed the supply; that every worker lifted into the highly skilled grades removes a little pressure from the hard driven crowd of unskilled seekers for work, and, finally, that a skilled and intelligent worker is intrinsically valuable both to herself and to her country.

It is sad when looking at the healthy, happy, well-mannered pupils of the Borough Polytechnic's schools, watching their bright faces and observing the refinement of speech and manner that they seem to acquire insensibly, to reflect upon the many hundreds of girls who never have a chance of similar development; girls who at fourteen or younger pass, less than half educated, out of an elementary school; whose home life is too much oppressed by poverty to have room for any intellectual interests, and who go into some "driving" factory or sordid workshop, never to learn first principles, never to gain any notion of the dignity or the significance of their work, never in all probability to earn a wage that will cover the actual cost of keeping themselves



decently fed, clothed and housed. In all the chaos of women's industrial employment, few facts are more distressing than the waste of girlhood that attends upon haphazard entry into employment and upon the substitution of "picking up" for trade teaching. In no department is the abandonment to chance of what should be a matter of human forethought and careful social action, attended by greater loss to individuals and to the nation.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE LAW AND THE WORKER

It is not necessary to examine in detail the points in which the Factory Acts have been of advantage to the workers of Great Britain. To four points, however, we wish to call a little attention. Of these the first is: Hours of work. In non-textile factories and in workshops\* women may work on five days a week for a period of twelve hours, less one and a half hours for meals; the beginning of any such period being not earlier than 6 A.M. and its close not later than 8 P.M. On Saturdays (or by special arrangement on Sundays in the case of Jews) the hours may be eight, less one hour's meal-time. The custom of different working places varies considerably as to the length of the day's work; and anything like wide generalisation is impossible. As far, however, as we can judge, two factors seem to encourage an employer to keep his people long at work, and those two are: payment by time; and the employment of machinery.

\* It may be well to mention that a workshop is a place where "power" is not employed, and a factory a place where "power" is employed.

Seasonality, too, obviously encourages long hours of work in the busy period ; thus we find that in the West-end tailoring trade the habitual hours of work are the utmost allowed by the Acts ; while, in the West-end dressmaking trade, though the nominal hours are generally less, not only are workrooms frequently kept open during the season to the later legal time, but advantage is also taken of the clause which allows (on certain conditions) of two hours' overtime for workers over eighteen, not oftener than three times in the same week, nor than thirty times in a year. There are to our knowledge a few establishments which habitually exceed even this allowance, habitually therefore transgressing the law. There are probably smaller places unknown to us which do the same. While anxious to see these offenders detected and the exorbitant toil of their employees lessened, we are awake to the difficulties of the employer. The great rush of work at a particular season can only be met (in present industrial conditions) either by the employment in the busy season of extra hands, or by getting more work out of those already employed. The engagement of "season hands"—a frequent practice—has many obvious drawbacks, both to employer and to employed ; and few employers seem to have devised any effective way of grappling with the grave problem of seasonal irregularity.\* Some firms pay extra for overtime, both when that word indicates work beyond the usual and up to the legal limit, and when it means work by special

\* See, for instances of attempts to do so, pp. 85-86.



permission beyond the legal limit. Other firms pay nothing extra ; and again others profess to set off the extra hours of work against earlier hours of cessation in the slack season—an arrangement unfair to the “season hands” engaged for the busy period only. That hours of work would but for the provisions of the Acts be, in very many cases, longer than they are now, we feel convinced. No employer, indeed, visited during the present investigation, has told us so ; but in another London trade more than one employer visited by one of the writers explicitly declared that they would keep open later, but for the Acts. Moreover, in retail shops, which are not restrained by law, we observe that some employers on certain days of the week keep their workers employed until 9, 10, 11 and even 12 P.M. It is fair to add, however, that a good many employers and managers—some of them hard-headed persons who make no pretence at humane motives—refuse to allow work beyond the ordinary hours of the Factory Acts (or sometimes beyond their own usual and earlier limit) on the ground that overtime does not really pay, and that the loss on output next day, added to the expenses of lighting, &c., counterbalances or more than counterbalances any profit.

Another comparatively recent clause in the Acts requires that workplaces shall be maintained “at a reasonable temperature”—interpreted by the Factory Inspectors as 60° Fahrenheit. This provision, too, has greatly mitigated the sufferings which used to be undergone every winter by hundreds of

workers and has probably to some extent diminished the death-rate amongst them. Some employers seem to be quite without conscience in this matter. Years ago women, some of whom may very well be still living, used to machine shirts (for a very well known and prosperous firm) in a wooden building the flooring of which was laid directly on the earth and which contained no sort of heating apparatus. Nothing quite so flagrant as this can, we believe, be found in London now ; but even in the course of this investigation complaints have reached us that the work-rooms of a large West-end shop remain unwarmed in spite of an inspector's warning, and that as lately as last autumn women sat to sew with hot flat-irons under their feet and strips of cloth laid over their shivering shoulders.

A third evil, which used to be rampant and which is shown by these pages still to exist, although in a diminished degree, is the taking of work home to do after a day's work in the factory. Very ill paid workers or workers who very badly need money are sorely tempted to this illegal course, and employers of the worse kind, understanding how the practice tends to lower wages, wink at it.

A fourth provision very frequently indeed disregarded is the provision that every piece-worker shall receive beforehand full particulars of the work assigned to him or her and of the payment to be given for it. Readers who have followed the details of cases in the text and in the tabulations will have seen that in case after case we note that "particulars" are not given. Many workers, indeed,

have no notion that they have a legal right to any such information.

A point not touched by the Factory Acts but brought into some prominence by the Report of the Select Committee on Home Work, is that of time spent in going to and from the employer's premises. The Committee actually recommends that "the amount which a worker could earn in a specified time should be calculated on a basis which included the time spent in fetching and returning the work as time occupied in doing the work." The result of such a regulation would obviously be to prevent the employment of persons who lived in the more airy outskirts of towns, and to intensify congestion in already overcrowded urban districts. If the Committee had extended its purview a little, and considered with more attention the case of the indoor worker, it would have perceived that while many home workers go and come twice or thrice in a week, every indoor worker goes and comes at least once every day. In respect of travelling, the home worker is better off, not worse off, than the indoor worker. The real loss of time of which home workers very justly complain occurs when they are kept waiting, as by many employers they constantly are, on the employer's premises. For that time, which is as much given to the employer as is the time spent in actual work, they ought to be paid, and their right to payment should be recognised in any law that might be framed to deal with their wages.

Fines and deductions from wages are dealt with



not under the Factory Acts but under special enactments known as Truck Acts.\* These Acts have formed the subject of an inquiry by a Departmental Committee which sat for two years and eight months and issued, in December 1908, a majority and also a minority report. In neither of these is a clear line of principle laid down and we venture to think that a real cure of the complicated evil of deductions will not be reached until the clear rule is set forth by law, that no employer shall make it a condition of hiring that any worker shall spend any portion of his leisure or of his money in any prescribed manner.† The pages of this volume contain many examples of deductions, and some of fines—which however do not prevail to so flagrant an extent in factories and in workshops as in retail shops. Practically all home workers provide cotton, and the machine, if one is used. They also of course provide workplace, firing and irons for pressing, when pressing is done, and lighting. But indoor workers are often quite as heavily mulcted.

\* The development of the word “truck”—which, meaning originally “something bartered” and so “payment in kind,” is now equivalent, in the vernacular, to “rubbish; goods of no value”—has a certain historical and sociological significance not entirely unworthy of attention.

† We do not forget the recommendation frequently put forward that employers shall insist upon young workers attending evening classes. This course seems to us less desirable after a day's work, and less likely really to result in much learning than its advocates suppose. The attending of trade classes during certain afternoons, *i.e.*, during nominal hours of work, seems far preferable. On this plan the London County Council has apprenticed various girls with, in the cases which we know best, conspicuous success.

Power is often charged for (one factory, happily now bankrupt, used to charge 2*d.* in every 1*s.* of nominal earnings) the workers more often perhaps than not provide cotton, and almost invariably machine needles. Some employers sell cotton to their employees, sometimes at cost price, *i.e.*, at a little less than the ordinary retail price, but sometimes (and in these cases the purchase is generally compulsory) at a little more. Pressers sometimes pay for use of irons and for gas ; frequently a charge is made for the use of kitchen or meal room, and sometimes for cleaning of these or of the factory. Wherever this last charge is made, its total appears largely to exceed the actual cost of cleaning. A charge of 2*d.* a week for hot water (exactd whether hot water is used or not) is by no means uncommon. A spoiled or damaged article is, in some places, charged, at retail price, to the worker ; in other places the worker has to pay at cost price for a new bit of stuff or lining to replace the damaged portion. Fines for unpunctuality are often excessive and harsh. It is common for women to be fined for arriving five minutes late at the price of an hour's work. When we consider how very liable to temporary delay is the traffic of London, and how considerable are the distances traversed daily by some workers, this fine appears especially unjust. In the course of this investigation two of us have twice been "held up" for over half an hour by a dislocation of the trams in Old Street—due on each occasion to the breakdown of some other sort of vehicle. And, side by side with factories in which

many, or occasionally all, of these fines and deductions prevail, we find others where practically the same goods are produced and which cater for precisely the same market, in which no charges or fines exist at all. Moreover the wage rates are apt to be higher in the latter factories than in the former. All these fines and deductions under whatever form they may masquerade are, in fact, forms of underpayment; and underpayment is the real root evil from which women workers (and many men workers, too) chiefly suffer. The law, which, in the matter of conditions, has helped them much, has hitherto never directly attacked the matter of payments. Now for the first time a serious attempt to check under payment by law seems likely to be made.

Before considering the possibilities of a legal minimum wage it may be well to consider whether underpayment may be checked by any other means. It has undoubtedly been checked among some groups of men by combination. Trade unions have in some trades secured the establishment of a minimum wage, and neither have employers been ruined thereby nor trade banished from these islands. In some few trades of women, also, trade unionism has become powerful—especially among the cotton operatives of the North. But experience seems to show that trade combination can seldom or never become effective when workers are below a certain level of prosperity. That level, it is true, is no very high one, but a large proportion of women workers do not attain to it. There are, however, signs of a great awakening of the spirit of



combination among women and it seems safe to prophesy that a marked development of trade unionism among women is not far distant ; but it is also safe to say that such development will begin among the more highly paid and will probably take many years to reach the worst paid. In the three trades with which we are especially dealing, we find the following condition of affairs. The Amalgamated Society of Tailors has in London a women's branch, with a small membership ; its offshoot, the London Society of Tailors and Tailoresses, is as regards women members in much the same condition. The number of women belonging to the two societies together may approach two hundred. In the provinces the National Union of Clothiers is making great and apparently successful efforts to organise the women workers in various tailoring centres, but at present has not touched London. Finally the National Federation of Women Workers includes a considerable number of tailoresses in Colchester. One group of London's tailoresses, however, is pretty strongly organised. This a group of workers in the Royal Army Clothing Factory, whose trade union includes nearly one thousand members. These workers, it may be noted, are receiving a much better wage than most factory tailoresses, namely, on an average, 5*d.* an hour, and their example tends to show that the comparatively well-paid woman is more inclined to combination than is her hungrier sister. The National Federation of Women Workers has a dressmakers' branch in London, but at present has not as many as a

hundred members. The same Federation includes, in the provinces, a number of "white workers" but in London has only a few members belonging to this branch—which covers baby-linen and most kinds of women's underlinen. London—as co-operators also have found—is a difficult place for organisation, and even the very remarkable organising ability of Miss Macarthur, the present secretary of the Woman's Trade Union League, has not yet succeeded in rousing a really powerful movement among the poorer working women of London. Even the most sanguine of optimists can hardly expect that for many years to come combination among these workers will be strong enough, by itself, to secure any great improvement in wages.

Meanwhile competition, especially on the lower levels, is intensified by the presence in the labour market of many married women absolutely compelled by economic pressure to add industrial toil to domestic cares that are already heavy enough. The employment of these women is in its essence a phase not so much of the underpayment of women as of the under payment of men. It is because hundreds and hundreds of men in London are paid only enough to keep a person, not enough to keep a household, that these women have become wage-earners; and the proper way to save them from their own killing toil, and the self-dependent woman from their competition, is to increase the pay of their husbands. Prohibition of the labour of married women as such (which indeed we can hardly imagine that any responsible statesman would seriously

propose) would carry with it evils almost greater than those which now exist; especially while the English law as at present gives to a wife, as such, no claim to any share of her husband's income.\* Neither in organisation nor in prohibition lies any immediate hope of amelioration.

Yet it is not possible for the public conscience—now increasingly aware of the hopeless conditions in which some of our most blameless and industrious citizens are born, live and die—to permit the continuance of these conditions. Extreme underpayment is a result of unlimited competition both as between employer and employer and as between worker and worker. Only by setting a barrier to the downward trend of wages can we hope to remedy that kind of poverty which is produced not by the vice, the drunkenness or the idleness of the sufferers but by their industry, patience and abstinence. The barrier against the stream of reduction must take the shape, as in trade union action it does, of a minimum wage; but, for the unorganised, the minimum wage must be enforceable by law. The Select Committee on Home Work—no very revolutionary body—were clear in their opinion “that it is quite as legitimate to establish by legislation a minimum standard of remuneration as it is to establish such a standard of sanitation, cleanliness, ventilation, air space and hours of work.” Upon another point that has alarmed many timid minds

\* Only when a wife becomes chargeable to the rates can her husband be compelled to pay for her support; and even then it is not she, but the Guardians, who can make a claim upon him.



they speak no less plainly : " If any trade will not yield such an income " (*i.e.*, one that will " secure at any rate the necessaries of life ") " to average industrious workers engaged in it, it is a parasite industry and it is contrary to the general well-being that it should continue. Experience, however, teaches that the usual result of legislation of the nature referred to is not to kill the industry but to reform it. Low priced labour is a great obstacle to improvement. . . . It discourages invention, and removes or prevents the growth of a great stimulus to progress and efficiency. The direct and early result of prohibiting unsatisfactory conditions in industrial life is almost invariably to direct the attention of the most competent minds in and about the trade to the production and introduction of such improvements in machinery, methods, and processes as will enable the industry to continue under greatly improved conditions and to be carried on with greater success than before."

It is generally proposed that special Boards shall be set up for such industries as it is intended to regulate, and that these Boards shall be composed of representatives of employers and representatives of workers in equal numbers, and that there shall be an impartial chairman. This balance of three elements, two representative and one impartial, is absolutely essential. The Board would have a right to take evidence and to inspect wage-books ; and its duty would be to fix the lowest payments, whether by time or by piece, that are henceforth to be allowable for any sort of work in the trade

concerned. In Victoria, the Wages Boards were allowed to fix as a minimum any rate already being paid by some employer in the trade. In many branches of the trades with which we are here dealing, such a provision would suffice to bring something like comfort to all the workers ; but in some parts of the ready-made trades—in the finishing of cheap shirts and trousers, for instance, and in the making of several kinds of blouses and coloured petticoats—we doubt whether (although of course some employers pay considerably better than others) any rates can be found that could be accepted as a reasonable minimum. In such cases as these the Board would have to fix a minimum for itself. A time-wage offers little serious difficulty in the fixing ; the difficulties there come at a later stage. In piece rates the contrary is the case ; the main difficulty lies in the first decision. The Board would have to begin by translating its minimum hourly rates into terms of piecework. The process, of course, is one that is carried on every day in hundreds of workplaces, by hundreds of employers, managers, and forewomen, and we do not believe that the representatives on the two parts would find any very serious difficulty as regards what may be called standard articles. All varieties of shirt-blouse, for instance, could easily be brought under classification, and so could all varieties of shirts or collars, or buttonholes. Certainly not all the “awards” would work out with absolutely mathematical precision at the estimated time rate ; but it may be reasonably expected that a pretty close

approximation would be reached. A greater difficulty occurs in regard to articles of constantly changing fashion, and this difficulty might be dealt with in various ways. Perhaps the best plan would be to fix a slightly higher time basis for the piece-work rate of "novelties," "specials," or "samples," such rates to apply for a certain period from the first introduction, and to permit the alternative of payment by time. We may point out that it is usual, at present, to pay higher for work "upon samples" than ✓ for work upon ordinary articles. It is conceivable that such a method would slightly check the frenzied eagerness of employers after new patterns, a result by no means to be deplored. It may also be that the existence of the Board rates would incline employers to prefer a time-rate wherever feasible. Now payment by time has its own special evils: it cannot be doubted that the average time worker lacking the incentive of increased gain for herself—or rather, to put the case more truly, the dread of lessened pay—is less disposed than the piece worker to "wire in," and that her energy has often to be stimulated by external driving. On the other hand, the very energy of the piece worker tends in the long run to lower wages, for many employers, when they observe one piece worker, or more than ✓ one, making an average of 4*d.* or 5*d.* an hour, will deliberately lower their rates. This disadvantage of piecework would be removed under the awards of a Trade Board.

Granting that the establishment of minimum rates, both by time and by piece, is perfectly practicable,



there remains the main test of every enactment, the test of disputes. How, when a complaint comes before the Board, when, for instance, an employer declares that the piece minimum works out at a much higher figure than the time basis? He will put in a pay-sheet showing that some woman has made, let us say, 30s. a week at some comparatively unskilled branch of work. The labour representatives will no doubt reply that one swallow does not make a summer and that the worker is phenomenally quick. They will ask for evidence of many similar cases ; or perhaps similar work will be placed before some three or four workers selected as competent by the joint opinion of the employer representatives and the labour representatives, and a decision will be given according to the results. Complaints that an employer was paying below the fixed minimum would be comparatively easy to decide.

But, it is said, the enactments of the Board will be evaded. Workers will join employers in a fraudulent appearance of being paid above the minimum when in reality they are paid below. That there will be evasion, especially at first, we at least do not doubt. We may point out that a law which no person desired to evade would be, by that very fact, superfluous. The Factory Acts have always been evaded to a considerable extent ; yet no one who has any acquaintance with industrial history will be found to deny that their influence has been powerful and has very greatly improved conditions of labour. Individual workers under the apprehension of dismissal have connived and no doubt

will connive at breaches of these Acts ; but it must be remembered that as far as restriction of working hours goes (and it is on this point that evasions chiefly occur) no immediate present gain to the worker is perceptible ; whereas the advantage of being better rather than worse paid is plain to every capacity. Some advocates of the legal minimum wage go so far as to believe that all workers will be so sensible of their own interests that they will eagerly support the Board and that there will be no successful evasions. With this sanguine view we cannot find ourselves entirely in agreement ; but we must admit that we have found, especially among younger workers, an eager interest in the proposal to establish a minimum wage. We shall not easily forget the way in which an assemblage of young tailoresses poured forth their stories of reduced rates nor the intelligence with which they discussed the possibility of a minimum fixed by law. The facts of their daily experience had taught these young women where the need lay and in what direction lay the remedy. Among them, at least, there would be no collusion with any would-be fraudulent employer. It is, after all, with the young that the future lies, and a new generation growing up under a system of Trade Boards will find it as much a matter of course to receive an approximately adequate wage, as factory workers now feel it to break off at 12.30 or 1 for a dinner hour. And here comes in the opportunity for trade unionism. To organise for a specific immediate object is comparatively easy ; hope is the very best of trade union advocates and some degree

of combination among the workers concerned will be of immense assistance to the work of the Boards.

Of the injury that would be done to home workers if the minimum were applied to them only, and not to their competitors within the factory, we have spoken already on page 44. We will only add here that, since the appearance of the Home Work Committee's Report (which recommends this limitation) we have made a point of asking the employers whom we have visited what effect upon their action the establishment of a minimum wage for home workers would have. The answer has been prompt and clear: "We should cease to employ them." Indeed we venture to think that if the members of the Committee could have interviewed all the workers of different grades who have been visited in the course of this inquiry, and could have realised how little the distribution of work or the rates of payment are actually affected by the lines of demarcation which they believed to exist, they would never have suggested the exclusion of the factory worker.

Of the possible improvement in the lives of the underpaid women whom we have learned to regard with so much admiration we can hardly venture as yet to dream. To national prosperity too the gain will be great. As an acute observer pointed out the other day\* the underpaid worker is really being subsidised by the public. "Things are so cheap," he writes, "*and yet are they?*" When will the ladies with the cheap blouses and the gentlemen with the

\* The Rev. W. Manning, of Leytonstone, in *St. Andrew's Church Magazine*.



cheap shirts understand that 6s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. and 3s. 11d. are not the prices that they pay. They pay those prices plus the difference between the minimum subsistence rate, 12s. 4d., and the 6s. 4d., the average earnings of a home worker. That same 6s. per week multiplied by the number of workers makes a considerable sum, which mark you, has to be met. We think that we do not meet it. O! yes we do. Pay day comes; after sixteen most people have learned that. How do you pay? You keep a large staff of parsons to raise charitable funds and run clothing clubs and soup kitchens, you keep an army of Poor Law officials, and build costly workhouses and infirmaries, you spend millions on educating children who are too sleepy and overworked to learn when they get to school, you levy in West Ham a 5s. 4d. Poor Rate, you have chaplains and medical officers and nurses."

From many of these really unproductive expenses the nation would be relieved if the mass of unmerited poverty could be diminished. At present such expenses are getting larger and larger. We are recognising how wasteful it is to permit children to grow up ill-nourished and without medical care; yet it is clear that children whose mothers are working at such rates as some that we have quoted cannot possibly be sufficiently fed at home. It is better and honester that workers should be paid by employers for work done, than that the children of workers should be supported by the tax-payer; it is also cheaper for the tax-payer, even if, in his character of consumer, he has to pay more for his shirts. But probably he will not have to pay

more—on the contrary. It has been shown over and over again that, when employers are prevented from developing their business along the lines of cheap labour and bad conditions, they proceed to develop it along the line of improved methods, and that the improved methods tend both to increased output and to greater cheapness. This fact ought to reassure those people who dread a minimum wage (or, indeed, any improvement in wages) as a cause of higher retail prices. Higher retail prices, they think, would inevitably lead to the importation of goods made at “sweated” rates by foreigners. Their fear rests upon a fallacy. In most trades it can be shown (this book is full of instances) that, even at present, employers paying comparatively high wages sell goods in the same market as employers paying extremely low wages; and that the retail price of the goods sold by the latter is as often higher as lower than that of the men who pay better. Cheapness of production is no necessary concomitant of low wages; and the notion that by raising wages we raise prices is one founded upon ignorance of commercial conditions. On the other hand, any considerable rise in wages increases the home market. Greater spending power in the hands of workpeople means a larger circle of buyers and therefore more flourishing trade. Moreover, the better paid worker, as experience constantly shows, tends also to become the better worker. Under payment is not really profitable in the long run, even to the man who employs it, although, in the rush of daily work, employers

cannot always stand back and take that wider view which would enable them to recognise the unprofitableness. And yet though it is, in the long run, more profitable to pay work-people a good wage, it is very difficult at present for any individual employer to do so in the face of unlimited competition. To the employer who would be glad to pay better—still more to the employer who despite the difficulty does pay better than the low prevailing rate—the establishment of a legal minimum would come as a vast relief. To the conscience of the public, much troubled by the problem of “sweating,” the relief would scarcely be less. In all Europe the movement for the establishment of a minimum wage is now strong and growing. As British women we hope that the credit of making the first step will belong—as the credit of the first Factory Acts belongs—to Great Britain.





## APPENDIX A

### HOME-WORKERS IN GERMANY

DURING the course of our investigation Miss Elizabeth Landsberg, of Breslau, was visiting London and inspected some of our tabulations. It was interesting to find that piecework rates for certain processes are practically the same in Breslau as in London. In one instance Miss Landsberg had obtained a year's wage-book of a German woman, the total of which we were able to compare with that obtained from a woman working in West Ham. The totals (in each case just upon £20) were practically identical.

Miss Landsberg very kindly sent us a copy of the schedule of questions employed by her association, and some sample sheets of answers, which are here appended.

The fact that the women visited belong to an organisation has made it possible to obtain very full details—much fuller than is possible when unorganised women are visited by strangers.

TRADE UNION OF THE WOMEN HOME  
WORKERS OF GERMANY

Branch.

Tabulation number.

Member's number.

QUESTION PAPER.

1. What is your name? (Precise address.)
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been here?
4. Are you single, married, divorced, deserted, or a widow?
5. What is your husband?
6. How much does he earn a week?
7. How many children have you?
8. How old are your children?
9. Do you live in a house to yourself, as a lodger, with parents, or relations?
10. What rent do you pay?
11. Do you let any part?
12. How much do you make, in that way, towards your rent?
13. Of how many rooms does your dwelling consist?
14. What are the conditions of the dwelling (light, dark, damp, how many windows)?
15. How many persons sleep in the dwelling?
16. Is the room in which you work also used for other purposes (for living, sleeping, cooking, work of any other kind)?
17. Do you support any one belonging to you?
18. Do you belong to a sick society; if so, to which?
19. Have you any ailment?
20. Does your illness arise from your trade, from using a treadle-machine, from over-exertion, from a sedentary occupation?
21. Do you receive poor-relief?
22. What articles are you at work upon now?
23. How long have you worked in that branch?
24. Do you get the work from a firm, from a middleman, or from whom? (Please give the name and address of the firm or of the middleman, and also the name and address, if known, of the firm for which the middleman works.)



25. (a) What do you get by the piece, pair, dozen, three-score, gross, hundred, thousand, kilo, hundred-weight, &c. ?

Prices per piece or dozen.

Plain. Style.		Medium.		Good.	
M.	P.	M.	P.	M.	P.

- (b) What have you to spend on each piece, dozen, &c. ?  
(For cotton, buttonhole twist, hooks and eyes, and other materials.)
- (c) How many can you complete in the week ?
- (d) What work have you to do to the articles (cutting, machining, buttonholes, &c.) ?
26. Do you work on samples ? What do you earn when you do ?
27. Does anybody help you in your work ? Who ?
28. What are your average weekly earnings ?
29. Does your machine belong to you ?  
(a) How much have you already paid for it ?  
(b) How much do you pay weekly ?
30. How long do you work every day ?  
(a) How often do you work on Sunday, and how long ?
31. Since January 1, 1905, when have you worked full time ?  
(a) Half time.  
(b) Had no work at all.
32. Do you do any other work in slack times ? What ?
33. Do you fetch and take in work yourself ?  
(a) Have you to pay fares or carriage ?
34. How often in the week do you take work back ?
35. When are you paid ?
36. Are there any disagreeables in fetching work ?  
(a) How long are you kept waiting ?  
(b) Have you an opportunity of sitting while you wait ?  
(c) Are deductions made from the pay ?  
(d) How are you treated ?
37. Have you been in service, as housemaid, cook, &c. ?
38. Why did you give up that calling ?
39. What trade did you learn ?
40. How long was the period of learning ?

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41. Did you pay a premium?
42. Were you kept on by the same firm when you came to receive full wages?
43. Do you prefer home work or factory work, and why?
44. What particular points have you to complain of?
45. In what way would you expect improvements?  
Filled up by . . . . .

### CASE A

1. ———
2. Thirty-nine years.
3. Always.
4. Married.
5. Painter; but he drinks and seldom follows his occupation.
6. Quite irregularly; often nothing, sometimes from five to ten marks.
7. Three.
8. 14, 12, and 10.
9. Own house.
10. 26 marks.
11. No.
12. ———
13. Two rooms, one closet, and one kitchen.
14. Damp and cold. Four windows.
15. Six persons: husband and wife, three children, and mother of wife.
16. Three persons sleep in the workroom. The cooking is done in the kitchen.
17. The old mother lives with us and helps as much as she can in the work.
18. No.
19. Very consumptive.
20. Through overwork and very poor nourishment.
21. No.
22. Children's clothes.
23. Seven years.
24. Firm (named).
25. 60 pfg. per suit (medium quality).  
(c) With five days' work (the girls do not work on Mondays): One hundred suits per week. The girls produce each ten jackets per day, the women ten pairs of knickerbockers each.

- (d) Cutting and pressing. (The woman now does the pressing herself. In the morning from 9 to 2.30 cutting; after dinner pressing of the twenty suits.)

This woman pays 45 marks in wages, and her earnings therefore are 15 marks, from which expenses for coal and other things are to be deducted. The net earnings for her day's work of twelve hours are hardly 11 to 12 marks per week.

Contrary to the local custom, she has arranged to do all the cutting herself.

26. For a sample, 1 mark is paid, but for this price the worker has to pay for all trimmings and sewing material, so that the apparent profit is lost. She makes the samples from her own designs.
27. Two girls for the jackets, two women for the knickerbockers.
28. About 60 marks, from which must be deducted:

Two persons machining each 50 pairs of knickerbockers at 15 pfg. . . . .	M. 15
Two persons machining each 50 jackets at 25 pfg. each . . . . .	M. 25
Pressing for each piece, 5 pfg. . . . .	M. 5
	<hr/>
	M. 45

29. Yes.
30. From 8 A.M. to 9 P.M. The mother looks after the household, so that work is not interrupted except for a short time for dinner.  
(a) Not at all.
31. ———
32. No.
33. The children. The messengers who bring the parcels of cloth from the warehouse have to be paid a tip of from 30 to 50 pfg.
34. Three to four times.
35. Every Saturday.
36. No. No waiting, the children are attended to at once. No deductions. Treatment very good; this makes up to a certain extent for the low wages.
37. No.
38. ———



39. First ladies' dressmaking, then tailoring for children, as the large coats for ladies are too hard to work.
40. No real apprenticeship, only occasionally taught.
41. No.
42. ———
43. This worker would prefer the employer to provide her with a workshop in which she would do the organisation of the work, the cutting, &c., for fixed wages, and where she would not be obliged to employ other persons on her own responsibility. She is to be regarded now as a small middlewoman who gives out work to four persons. The home conditions are very sad, as she has to keep the husband and as she lives in continual fear of the acts of violence which he is liable to commit when in drink.

## CASE B

1. ———
2. Twenty years.
3. For ten years.
4. Unmarried.
- 5-8. ———
9. In own dwelling with widowed mother and two sisters.
10. 15 marks.
11. No.
12. ———
13. One room and closet.
14. Light, two windows.
15. Four persons.
16. For living and cooking.
17. No.
18. No.
19. Hoarseness at times.
20. Yes. Overwork, and is liable owing to her occupation as a presser to catch colds.
21. The mother receives poor relief to the amount of 3 marks.
22. Boys' clothing.
23.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years.
24. From a firm (named)
25. (a) 50 to 70 pfg. per piece, plain kind.  
       (b) 5 to 8 pfg. per piece, for thread, twist, hooks and eyes.  
       (c) 5 to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  dozen.

The wages are calculated as follows :

Average weekly production, 70 pieces @ 55 pfg.	M.	38.50
Instalment sewing machine	M.	2
Thread, daily, 34 pfg.	„	2.04
Hooks and eyes, and trams	„	1.35
Coal . . . . .	„	- 90
Wages to machinist for machining knicker- bockers, 15 pfg. each	„	10.50
For finishing knicker- bockers, 15 pfg. each	„	10.50
		<hr/> M. 27.29
		M. 11.21

Hours of work from 7 A.M. to 8 P.M. with short intervals.

26. No.
27. The mother and one machinist.
28. With the mother 15 marks.
29. Yes, but the machines are not yet paid for.  
Have paid 8 marks.  
One mark per week for each machine.
30. In busy times occasionally the forenoon.
31. Five months full work, from Christmas to Whitsuntide  
Six months slack work, and one month (September)  
none.
32. No.
33. The brother (nine years old) usually, sometimes the mother.
34. Three times per week.
35. For every delivery.
36. Sometimes difficulties.  
(a) Up to three hours.  
(b) Yes.  
(c) No.  
(d) Generally satisfactory.
37. No.
38. —
39. Has learnt ladies' tailoring.
40. One year.
41. No.
42. —
43. Prefers home work ; it saves money, as one uses and wears  
less clothing.

44. The calculation of wages shows that this home worker earns less than her paid assistants. The 11.21 marks include the wages for the mother who helps daily four hours, and for the delivery of goods by the brother. The mother was at one time engaged in the same industry in Berlin and did not then earn more than now. The knickerbockers are given out to be machined and are paid for at 15 pfg. each.

## CASE C

1. ———
2. Thirty-five years.
3. Since 1890.
4. Widowed for two years.
5. Was employed on electric tramway.
6. ———
7. Three.
8. Boy aged 10, two girls aged 6 and 4.
9. In own tenement.
10. 19.50 marks.
11. No.
12. ———
13. Lobby, kitchen (one window), room (two windows) and closet.
14. Light.
15. Four.
16. Cooking.
17. No.
18. No.
19. No.
20. ———
21. 9 marks—poor relief for the children.
22. Boy's clothing.
23. Seven to eight years.
24. Firm (named).
25. (a) 60 pfg. per suit, plain kind (jackets 45 pfg., knickerbockers 15 pfg.).  
 (b) Expense per jacket 3 pfg. each: thread 96 pfg. per 50; hooks and eyes, coal 60 pfg. Use of machine not reckoned.  
 (c) On the average, thirty jackets a week, maximum forty.



- (d) Finishing and buttonholes, cutting of lining, pressing of whole suits.

Average weekly earning 18 to 24 marks.

Six jackets, without pressing take  $15\frac{1}{2}$  hours, therefore 2.40 marks per  $15\frac{1}{2}$  hours, plus thread — marks + 18 marks, = 2.22 marks, *i.e.*, 14 to 15 pfg. per hour.

26. In the case of special orders which must be tried on, extra earnings are only made if several pieces are produced of the same pattern; 30 to 40 pfg. per suit additional to ordinary earnings.
27. The trouser machinist receives, as is the custom in B., 25% of the payment per pair. The children assist occasionally and also help in the household.
28. Average weekly earning 12 to 13 marks net; maximum 18 marks.
29. On instalment.  
 (a) 6 marks.  
 (b) 1 mark.  
 Hours of labour: 11 to 12 daily.
30. Sometimes, when immediate delivery is required.
31. Full work January to May and September to end of December.  
 Slack work June, July, August.  
 No work never, but sometimes four to six pieces only per week. This does not occur often, as the firm considers the home worker.
32. No.
33. Yes.
34. Two or three times.
35. On delivery.
36. No difficulties.  
 (a) No waiting, the work is always ready to be taken away.  
 (b) —  
 (c) No.  
 (d) Very decent, never noisy.
37. Was cook.
38. In order to marry.
39. Has helped a neighbour and thus learned the work.
- 40-42. —
43. Does not know work in workshop, and could not think of it.

44. Remnants of material sometimes remain, which are to the good of the worker. She worked before for a whole-sale firm which measured so strictly and made so many difficulties that she was obliged to buy material for lining. She made things easier for herself by using second-hand pieces and for this reason was dismissed.

## CASE D

1. ———
2. Thirty-nine years.
3. For nineteen years.
4. widowed.
- 5-6. ———
7. Three children.
8. 17, 13, and 11.
9. In own tenement.
10. 24 marks per month.
11. Three lodgers.
12. 6 marks per bed monthly, *i.e.*, 18 marks.
13. Lobby, kitchen (one window), room (two windows), and room (one window).
14. Light. Four windows. Dry; but very high (fifth storey).
15. Six. (The eldest daughter is in domestic service.)
16. For everything, for the machine is in the kitchen where also the worker sleeps with her youngest daughter.
17. No.
18. No.
19. No.
20. ———
21. From the pension fund of railway workers a monthly pension of 12.50 marks.
22. Boys' knickerbockers, sizes 1 to 6.
23. Six years.
24. From a middleman (address, also that of firm of employers given).
25. For two pairs, sizes 1 to 6 (sometimes also 7 and 8) 25 pfg. without pressing (plain kind). When she complained of the low wage, was told that she would be paid 15 pfg. per pair including pressing.
  - (b) Expense per two pairs, 5 pfg. For fifty pieces, thread costs 80 pfg., namely, four spools at 20 pfg., further thread for buttonholes, machine oil, &c.

(c) Forty-eight pieces per week.

(d) Finishing and buttonholes.

The cloth is cut and the lining divided out, but the blouses and pockets must be cut by the worker who has also to trim, to cut the buttonholes, and to stitch and finish everything.

Slow worker.

26. Yes, only 5 pfg. per piece more.
27. A sister-in-law during the afternoon who receives 25 pfg. and afternoon coffee in payment.
28. 6 marks. If she wants to earn 7 marks, she must work all through the night.
29. Yes.
30. 10 to 12 hours. Sundays given up to housework.
31. Full work from September to May.  
Slack from June to August.
32. Has done washing at slack times, but prefers to sew jackets.
33. Yes, to middleman. No cost of carriage.
34. Twice, Wednesdays and Saturdays.
35. Saturdays.
36. No difficulty. No waiting. No deductions.  
(d) When delivery not quite punctual, scolded.
37. Was cook.
38. On account of marriage.
39. The sewing of boys' knickerbockers.
40. Fourteen days.
41. No. Learned from sister who soon paid her for her work.
42. The sister lived too far away. Has been working for present employer for four years.
43. Prefers home work on account of household duties.
44. Complains about low wage; has considered possibility of giving up work for present employer, but afraid of not being able to find work elsewhere.
45. Would expect improvement from higher piece wages so that middle person should be enabled to pay more to home workers.

## CASE E

1. ———
2. Fifty-one years.
3. For thirty-two years.
4. Widowed.



- 5-6. ———  
 7. Six.  
 8. 23, 21, 19, 17, 11 and 10.  
 9. Own tenement.  
 10. 18 marks per month,  
 11. No.  
 12. One daughter works in workshop, pays for her own support and lives with mother.  
 13. Lobby, two rooms with one window each, closet.  
 14. Light.  
 15. Six.  
 16. No.  
 17. No.  
 18. No.  
 19. At times rheumatism.  
 20. No.  
 21. No.  
 22. Boys' clothing, sizes 1 to 6.  
 23. For twenty years.  
 24. From firm (named).  
 25. (a) Per piece :

Plain.	Med.	Best.
Pfg.	Pfg.	Pfg.
65	75	85
without lining.	half lining.	

If two rows of buttons :

little more .      80 .      90

- (b) 6 pfg. per piece for thread, having buttonholes made.  
 (c) Forty overcoats per week.  
 (d) Cutting of lining, sewing, and pressing.  
     Coals, 1 mark per week.  
 Suits paid at 80 pfg. take five hours to make.  
 26. No.  
 27. Two daughters.  
 28. After deduction of expenses, on the average 28.50 marks for three persons.  
 29. Yes.  
 30. No work on Sundays. Five days for occupation and one for housework.  
 31. Full work, all the year round.

- 32. ———
- 33. Yes.
- 34. Twice.
- 35. Saturdays.
- 36. No difficulties.
  - (a) Must sometimes wait.
  - (b) Yes.
  - (c) No deductions so far.
  - (d) Satisfactory.
- 37. Housemaid.
- 38. Marriage.
- 39. Boys' clothing.
- 40.  $\frac{1}{4}$  year.
- 41. No. Worked for master.
- 42. After having learned, immediately employed at wages.
- 43. Prefers home work in order to be able to look after the household.
- 44. The home, although very simple, is attractive and neat. She says that deductions are sometimes made from her wages for postage when delivery is late. This has not happened to her but to the others. Employer dismissed workers known to belong to organisations for fixing wages, *i.e.*, when actively engaged in trade union efforts.

[For the translation of these schedules we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. Bruno Lasker.]

## APPENDIX B

THE two schedules of questions employed in this investigation (one for employers and one for workers) are appended below ; together with some hints for the guidance of investigators, which experience has shown to be useful.

The amount of time that may be wasted in writing a report when cases are presented upon paper of all sorts of shapes and sizes is sadly familiar to those who have attempted the task, and the importance of preserving a clear address and the name of the investigator, for purposes of verification if necessary, will be readily understood.

### QUESTIONS IN REGARD TO EMPLOYERS

1. Is the trade high-class, medium, or cheap ?
2. Description of article or process.
3. Branches in which women are employed ?
4. Are the workers paid :
  - (a) Time wages ? or
  - (b) Piecework rates ?
5. If the workers are paid by time, state :
  - (a) Whether work is regular or intermittent.
  - (b) Approximate output per hour.
  - (c) Wages paid per week.



6. If the workers are paid by piece, state :
  - (a) Price per garment or part of garment.
  - (b) Time taken by worker to complete work.
  - (c) Rate per hour.
7. Are there any fines or deductions from wages ?
8. Are there any further charges or expenses that fall upon the worker ?
9. Working hours ; meal times ; overtime.
10. What are the busy and what the slack seasons ?
11. Are there outdoor hands employed ? If so, is the out-worker's list kept up and sent in ?
12. Do married women work ?
13. Is there a trade union ?
14. Remarks.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS.

15. Training :
  - (a) Is trade learnt throughout ?
  - (b) Apprenticeship ? Indentures ?
  - (c) Premium ?
  - (d) Length of training ?
  - (e) Wages during training ?
16. Is there an intermediate stage after training before a worker is considered fully qualified ?

#### QUESTIONS IN REGARD TO WORKERS.

1. Is the class of trade high-class, medium, or cheap ? Name of employer.
2. Give full description of article dealt with, and of process.
3. Where is the trade carried on ? Factory ? Workshop ? Home ?
4. Is worker paid :
  - (a) Time wages ? or
  - (b) Piecework rates ?
5. If worker is paid by time, state :

- (a) Whether work is regular or intermittent.
  - (b) Approximate output per hour.
  - (c) Wages paid per week.
6. If worker is paid by piece, state :
- (a) Price per garment or part of garment.
  - (b) Time taken by worker to complete work.
  - (c) Rate per hour.
7. Is worker paid different prices for same or similar work ?  
If so, state further whether these different prices are paid by :
- (a) Different employers.
  - (b) Same employer for work on different orders.
  - (c) An employer direct, or a middleman.
8. Are there any fines or deductions from wages ?
9. Are there any further charges or expenses that fall on the worker ?
10. Are " particulars " given to the worker in accordance with the law ?
11. Is the worker in receipt of Poor Law Relief or of any other additions to earnings ?
12. Is the worker single, married, or widow ?
13. General family conditions.
14. Hours of work, and overtime.
15. Remarks.

### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

16. What are the prospects for a girl entering the trade ?
17. What sort of training ?
- (a) Is trade learned throughout ?
  - (b) Apprenticeship ? Indentures ?
  - (c) Premium ?
  - (d) Length of training ?
  - (e) Wages during training ?
  - (f) Technical classes ?
18. Is there an intermediate stage after apprenticeship : *e.g.*, as " improver."

## HINTS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF INVESTIGATORS

Reports should be written on the slips specially provided, and each answer should be numbered according to the question to which it refers.

It is best to write each answer on a separate slip, but, when an answer consists only of a very few words, it may appear on the same sheet as another (of course, separately numbered).

The first slip of each report should bear :

- (a) The name of the visitor, or visitors.
- (b) The date of visit.
- (c) The full address of the firm or worker visited.

It is most important that the district as well as the name of the street should be given. Such an address as: "Mrs. Smith, 4 Church Street," is quite inadequate. Only one side of each slip should be written upon.

Question 2. It is imperative to give a full description of the articles upon which workers are engaged. For instance, in the case of a blouse, a rough estimate should be given of the cost of material; the number of tucks, &c., the amount, and kind of trimming should be stated.

Question 7 (b). The same employer will sometimes pay different prices for similar work, according to the price he is himself receiving. This is the case referred to under (b).

Question 8. Fines are disciplinary in character, and are inflicted for unpunctuality, &c. Deductions are made for (a) bad or damaged work; (b) working materials supplied by employer; (c) some supposed benefit, such as hot water for tea, gas, cleaning of workroom, &c.

Question 9. By "further charges" are meant such items as hire or purchase of sewing machine, or the cost of working materials not purchased from the employer, fares to and from work, &c.

It will generally be found unwise to write down any notes while actually on the premises. A rough note-book is convenient for noting answers immediately after leaving, and these should be written out at the earliest possible moment.

Reports should be as life-like and complete as possible. Details that seem in the individual case unimportant, become significant when they recur again and again. Thus, in the case of workers, good or bad health, conditions of housing, and family,



cheerfulness or the reverse are points worth noting, and so is the approximate age.

In visiting a firm, not only the size, but the character of the working place (lightness, cleanness, &c.), is important. The general appearance of the workers, their roughness or tidiness, whether they work standing or sitting, whether they look well or ill, are matters to be observed.

Finally, visitors are reminded that patience and sympathetic courtesy are necessary. We are, after all, asking a favour from those who give us information.

APPENDIX C

TABULATED CASES

OTHER THAN THOSE MENTIONED IN THE LIST

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
161	Medium	Waistcoats of all descriptions. They do a good many knitted waistcoats. More machine work than hand work	Workshop for a middle-man	—	Time wages: regular, 13s. weekly. In this workshop the worker thinks 13s. and 15s. weekly are the highest wages he would give	—	—
308	Good medium	Has worked for many first-class City firms. Tried a cheap firm once but could not do the cheap work. Does waistcoats of all kinds both for day and	Home	Day waistcoats 3s. each. Dress waistcoats, 3s. 6d. each. Cheap fancy waistcoats, 5d. each. Machining, not finishing. Retail at 4/6 and 5/- each	—	Day waistcoats 3s. each. 1 in day working from 6 A.M. to 6.30 P.M. with very little	She does not think there is much change in the prices paid for good waistcoat work



# TABULATED CASES

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	—	—	Single girl of about 19 years of age. She lives at home with her parents. There are 11 children, but all are earning now but 3. Her father is a caretaker and does odd jobs. She says they can manage fairly well, as all the children earning give something towards home expenses	8.30 - 8 P.M. 1½ hrs. for meals. Very little overtime, but about 6 months in the year is slack time	This girl works in a small workshop. About 10 employed. She has been in the same place 5 years and she thinks her employer very fair. Their busy times are from March to July, then they are on ¾ time and half time. They are never sent quite away, although she had only a ½ day in one week. Her employer gets 2/6 for an ordinary single-breasted waistcoat; 3/- if a double-breasted one; if bound, braided and traced may get 4/-; this is the highest price; 2d. extra pockets, 3d. basting for fittings. When busy they can turn out 25 waistcoats in one day. This girl has the best wages he gives. She is a good worker and can braid and trace the waistcoats
—	Cotton and silk	—	Married. Her husband was a barman, but after their first child was born he gave it up, as people do not like to have children in a public house. The owners who put these people into houses to look after the bar, like married couples with	When she can get work works long hours, but work very slack now, has only had 2 waistcoats in 4 weeks	This worker is a good waistcoat hand. She worked with her mother for many years before she married. She says a woman can earn 3/- daily by working 10-12 hrs. if she is a good worker. She tried some cheap work, but found she

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
—	—	evening wear. Not entirely made by hand but with a good deal of hand work in them. Also did cheap fancy waistcoats when she was slack in good work, but could not get on with the cheap work	—	About 3½d. an hour	—	time off for meals	In one firm for which she worked formerly they gave 4/6 for a waistcoat for which they now give 4/-
244	High class	All kinds of coats—day, evening and hunting. All hand work—felling and finishing coats. Does not make buttonholes. She is just now learning to make buttonholes, and then she will be a first-class coat-finisher	Workshop for a middleman	—	Time wages : regular 20/- weekly. Very little slack time, for tailoring. Gets hunting orders when other tailors are slack		

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks
—	—	—	no children. He now does casual work, sometimes in one trade, sometimes in another; is at present in the leather trade. Averages about 18/- weekly. 5 children; rent 5/6. Have lived in this house many years before she was married, so get it at a low rent	—	could not do it. A high-class waistcoat hand could not do this slop work at a rate to make it pay even a little. Most good waistcoats are hand done, with just machining round edges and pockets and seams, not much seen
No	No. Traveling expenses when wet, 2d. each way	—	A single girl of about 20 years of age, living with her parents, who have a comfortable home. Her mother is bed-ridden with heart disease. There are 3 children, 2 at school. The husband is a labourer in a foundry, not much money. The mother was a boxmaker before and after her marriage. The fancy boxes, for which she had 8/- a gross as a girl, are now 2/9 a gross. Rent, 6/-	8-8 P.M. 1½ hrs. for meals. Tea is given	This girl went to work first for a Jew who gave her 5/- weekly to begin with. She stayed there till she was earning 10/- weekly. Then went to a middleman at 17/- weekly. She was the only hand except the man and his wife. There she was really sweated, for although she was not paid piecework rates, yet if a certain amount was not done in the week, he took something off her wage. Her present "governor" is very fair, and she considers herself lucky to have struck such a good place. He is a foreigner and keeps 2 girls besides himself. If this worker wastes time going to shop, he will give



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
230	Cheap	This girl does finishing. No buttonholes but sewing on buttons and tacking in linings, &c. She also helps to give out the work to out-workers and "books in" new work. In fact she is a kind of "right hand" to her master	Workshop for a middleman	The middleman's prices for <i>outdoor</i> hands are as follows: 2/9 a doz. men's coats, machining entirely. 3/- a dozen overcoats. 6d. a doz. for coats, finishing entirely; not buttonholes, they are done by machine. 9d. a dozen for overcoats	Time wages: regular. 11/- weekly. for informant	One worker can finish 1 doz. coats in 3 hours	—

# TABULATED CASES

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—  No	—  No	—  —	—  A single girl of 18 who lives with her parents. Father in regular skilled work. There were 13 girls and 1 boy in the family—8 now alive—2 working; this girl and one other girl, also at tailoring, who has 2/- daily at a middleman's. Complains of a good deal of slack time. Home seems comfortable, father earns good money	—  8-8. 1½ hrs. for meals	her 1/-, so that last week she made 22/6 instead of 20/-  This girl is very well satisfied with her part of the work. She has been almost 2 years at this place and has had her money regularly. The middleman has decided to send away all his indoor machine hands this week—he only pays time wages and he tells this girl that he has calculated that <i>indoors</i> it costs him £13 to do exactly the same amount of work he can have done <i>outdoors</i> for £8. The outdoor hands, of course, supply cotton, machine, &c. and indoors he is at the expense of it all. The middleman gets 6d. each for lounge coats, 1/- and 1/3 for overcoats. Coats for a railway company, 10d. He turns out over 1000 coats weekly. Last week took £33 from one firm alone. The indoor girls say he is very fair and some of them say he pays better than they were paid in one of the wholesale places which he supplies. This worker says it

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
91	High class and medium	Men's coats of every description — top-coats, evening coats, &c. This girl makes the sleeves, pads the collars, makes buttonholes and sews on buttons	Workshop	—	Time wages; regular. 10/- weekly. The slack times are Dec.-Jan. and Feb., then they are very busy till	—	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	—	—	—	—	is mostly the old women outdoors who do the finishing—sometimes they walk a couple of miles and only get 2 coats out, 1d. They will take these away and bring them back in 2 or 3 hours done and then if the master is out they cannot be paid. Of course his work is slop work. For a coat, which brings the middleman 6d., his expenses are: machinist, 2½d., finisher (no button-holes) ½d., = 3½d. He also pays button-hole machinist 14/- a week and has to pay a presser and a carrier. It looks as if he did not make more than 1d. or ½d. on each coat
—	Needles only	—	Single girl living with parents. Gives her mother all her earnings. Mother keeps her and clothes her out of them. Saw girl at club, did not visit home.	8.30-7.30 1½ hrs. for meals. This girl has no overtime as yet, but tells me some of the better hands have overtime for which they are paid 1/- an hour	This worker tells me that a woman cannot entirely make a man's coat, she says some women think they can but it would not pass in a good shop. The girls who are paid less do not have so much slack time, but the better hands do. During slack time they come up daily to see if there is work and often get a day's or half

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
—	—	—	—	—	end of June, then slack in August	—	—
386	Medium	Does all kind of tailoring—mostly trousers and breeches. She is a finisher and very quick (a) Khaki breeches. All seams are sewn down tightly after they are machined—pockets to put in, linings in, top and seat and buttons (no buttonholes; these are chine-made, and a finisher gets 3d. for finishing 100 holes after	Factory and workshop	Piecework rates: (a) a pair. (b) 2½d. a pair. (c) 3d. a pair. (d) 3½d.-4½d. a pair. This was at a middleman's. At the factory she had 3d. a pair and no buttonholes to do and all trimmings found. About 2d. to 2½d. a pair	—	(a) 1 hr. 10 minutes to finish one pair. (b) do. (c) 1 hr. to do one pair (d) 2 hours hard work to do one pair	—

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	—	—	—	—	a day's work in this way, according as orders come in. Her master is a middleman who gets work from several shops. Worker seems to think that girls are paid much better in tailoring than in dressmaking. She says the head tailor-ess in her room has 30/- weekly and she thinks a woman who is a good coat hand can rise from 30/- to 34/- weekly
—	At the factory, no ex-penses. At mid-dleman's all trim-mings, 1 yd. twist 1d., 8 yds. gimp, 1d. white thread, 1½d., reel of white cotton for felling 1d. Total 5½d. About 1½d. to earn 1/-. Before a woman could begin the "finish-ing" of a pair of	—	Married woman about 30 years old. Husband a porter earns 25/- weekly. 2 children. Mother lives with them and is supported by them during recent years. Rent 10/6; lets off for 2/6. The house did not seem very clean and was out of repair. The woman has to do all repairs herself and says she has spent £3 in this way since last year. Does not go to work now, found it did not pay	9-8, 9-4.30 Sats. 1½ hrs. for meals	During the Boer War this woman says they had 6d. for khaki breeches and tartans, but they have now gone back to 3d. Speaks well of the factory. They will not employ Jews either indoor or out-door, they supply all trimmings and have all pressing and buttonholes done separately. At middleman's she had about the same money and had to do 7 buttonholes by hand in each pair of trousers and had to supply all trimmings. She says he is a regular sweater. Bespoke work is rather better paid but much more work. The trousers



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
		<p>they are ma- chined) (b) Police- men's trou- sers. All seams had to be back- stitched by hand to make them stronger linings, turn up bottoms, buttons (c) Tartans same as khaki (d) Ordinary trousers. Li- nings, poc- kets, button- holes, but- tons, turn up bottoms. Sometimes no button- holes</p>					
126	High class and medium	All kinds of waistcoats. Formerly did all by hand, now partly machine work	Home	<p>Piecework rates: waist- coats begin at 3/6 each; for each extra pocket 3d., and for bast- ing 3d. So the price generally works out at 4/- a waist- coat, single- breasted. Double- breasted waistcoats begin at 4/- and work up to 4/6 or 4/9</p>	—	Can do one to one and a half daily	—

# TABULATED CASES

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
	trousers, for which she is paid 3d. she thus has to make an outlay for trimming of 5½d.				had to be basted first, then fitted, machined, and finally came back to be finished; for all this 8d. is paid. She tells us the machinists' prices are (a) Policemen's trousers, 3s. a dozen. To do 8 in a day would be hard work. (b) Khaki breeches, 5/6 a doz. 4 large patches which have 12 rows of stitching on each; can make about 2/6 a day on them, very hard work
—	Machine is worker's own. Cotton and thread	Yes, on tickets	Single girl, lives alone and pays 3/6 rent for her room	When busy works 10-12 hours daily	This worker used to work in a workshop for a tailor who had his work from a West End firm and she had there 18/- weekly wage. She prefers working at home, although she does not make as good money. The firm paid according to the "log," that is why the middleman could give such good money. It was high-class work and a good firm to work for

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
295	Medium a n d c h e a p	The worker says this middle woman has been taking work from same firm 40 years. During that time has only had 1 week without any work. Gets medium work when firm has it, but takes cheap work when she cannot get other. Sometimes has plain unlined skirts, tweed coats, Gibson coats	Home, for a middle- woman	<p>each. 6d. an hour. A girl can make 15/- to 16/- weekly working on piecework. Unfortunately there is a great deal of slack time, so that these wages cannot be taken as a yearly average</p> <p>(a) <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>-length coats. Tweed single-breasted — machining only, not finishing. Some have more seams, some have bound seams, 2 pockets, turn over collar and cuffs = 5½d. With extra seams or bound seams 6d. and 7d. (b) Gibson coats with capes, 1/1 each. (c) Skirts 4½d. 5d. each. 4d. an hour. This girl says she averages 15/- weekly</p>	—	<p>(a) 1 in hour. Extra seams 1 in 1½ hours. (b) 1 in 3 hours. (c) 1 in hour</p>	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Owns machine. Cotton of different colours; difficult to give an estimate	Yes; samples shown	Single girl about 20 years of age, living with her parents, who keep a small shop. She is a smart looking girl and is a quick worker	According to what work she has. Generally works factory hours	Says the middle-woman is a very fair employer. She does not have much slack time, as the woman fills in the time by taking cheaper work which, worker says, pays fairly well

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
77	High Class	Waistcoats of every kind, livery waistcoats, white evening and dress waistcoats, also making up knitted waistcoats. Almost entirely made by hand—only the welts could be done by machine if it could be hidden. Sometimes rows of machining are put on pockets and round waistcoats, but not always. Waistcoats sometimes have two pockets, sometimes four; extra pay is given for each pocket	Home for many years and workshop	Had 4/3 for waistcoats with two lower pockets, watch-pocket 3d. extra; 2 large upper pockets 9d. or sometimes 1/- extra. Two rows double stitching round waistcoats, 6d. extra. Double-breasted waistcoats with lapels, 6/6, making knitted waistcoats, 6/6. For basting waistcoats for trying on, 3d. and 6d. 4/3 up to 7/6 each waistcoat	Time wages in workshop—regular, not much slack time—6/-, 9/-, 15/-, 21/-. A girl in the old days could get up to 21/- weekly	Could make one waistcoat in a day by sitting very long hours	Worker had same prices for her work from her different firms. It rarely varied more than a penny or two. She had her work from an employer direct

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No, worker never spoiled anything but imagines you would have to pay value of cloth if you did	Needles	Are not always given. Once worker did buttonholes in black when they should have been in red. Foreman was very angry but worker showed him that it was not on the ticket attached to the work	This worker is a widow and has Poor Law relief 3/6, 2 sons allow her 2/- each. She is a very old woman over 70 years old. She lives in a clean room and looks very thrifty. She has been a tailoress 55 years. She pays 3/- rent for one room now	In old days 7 A.M. - 8 P.M. 1½ hrs. for meals. A great deal of over-time, for which they were paid. The hours were counted up and sometimes in a week they would have a whole day's money. They were not paid by the hour as now. Often she was at work in the workshop at 6 A.M.	This woman has been 55 years in the business, but for 3 or 4 years cannot get work as she is considered too old, although she says she can do good work yet and often helps her daughter, who is a tailoress. She began with a home working tailor for a West End house at 6/- weekly, as she was a good needlewoman, and quickly rose to 9/- and then 15/-. Then she worked for the same firm under a middlewoman, who employed several hands. Here she had 21/-. This woman had a pension of 17/- weekly from her employer in old age. After leaving this place worker married and did not work for some time, then her husband died and she took home work for years to support herself and 6 children. She always worked for 2 shops and in this way did not have much slack time. She has made as much as 30/- and 35/- weekly, working very long hours. As she always worked for West End firms she had to live in the



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
180	High class	Very best work. All kinds of waistcoats except white ones. Nearly all hand work	Home	<p>Piecework rates: according to the "log." (a) Single-breasted waistcoat, 2 pockets, <math>4/11\frac{1}{2}</math>. Each extra pocket, 7d. (b) Puffs (pieces let in between back and front) <math>3\frac{1}{2}d</math>. (c) Back straps, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d</math>. (d) Basting, 7d. (e) Re-basting, <math>1/2</math>. (f) Cuts in fronts (small seams) 7d. (g) Basting double-breasted waistcoat, <math>1/2</math>. (h) Re-basting, <math>1/9</math>. 7d. an hour; price of one hour is taken off each waistcoat for machining. They are paid for alterations, but they do not like them as there is so</p>	—	<p>(a) <math>8\frac{1}{2}</math> hours' work; pockets extra, each 1 hr. (b) <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> hour's work. (c) <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> hour's work. (d) 1 hour. (e) 2 hrs. (f) 1 hr. (g) 2 hrs. (h) 3 hrs. Between the m, working very hard they could do 3 waistcoats in a day</p>	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	The firm they now work for supplies thread, twist and part of cotton. they have only to get cheap machining cotton	Tickets on each waistcoat with name of purchaser and all particulars	A widow and 3 daughters. This family has two large rooms with plenty of light and air. One living room and one bedroom where the work is done. One daughter looks after house and does buttonholes. One presses and one with mother makes the waistcoat	They work many hours during the busy season. They have quite 6 months slack time	West to save time—her rent used to be 6/- and she once paid as much as 9/- for 2 rooms—now in the same locality one room lets at 7/-  These workers work entirely for one firm and have done so for 6 years. This firm works for members of the royal family. The mother worked for 17 years for one West End firm. It was not "log" work and did not pay so well. Single breasted waistcoat worked out about 5/6 or 6/-. A double-breasted one about 7/6. Many years ago 4/- was a good price for a waistcoat, but there was not nearly so much work in it nor so many extras and fittings as are required to-day. If there is any work in the shop this family get it as they are considered good quick workers. In this way they have not quite so much slack time as others. Still there are several months when they make very little or nothing

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
				<p>much ripping out that it does not pay them. Roughly a single-breasted waistcoat works out at 6/6 or 7/. Investigator did not ask at what price a double-breasted waistcoat starts but thinks it is calculated at 11 hours or <math>11\frac{1}{2}</math> hours = 6/5d.; pockets basting &amp; rebasting same as in single-breasted. If they turn out 3 waistcoats in the day, say at 6/6, that is 19/6 between 4, about 4/10½ each, of course this is hard work and long hours</p>			
121	Medium a n d Cheap.	Juvenile suits finishing only knickers: sew on buttons, fell the flies. Blouses, sew buttons on,	Factory	Piecework rates: knicker finishing, 6d. a dozen. Blouse at 6d. a dozen. 3d. an hour. The	—	6d. an hour	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No; if late shut out for half a day	Cotton, thread, 2 reels of cotton, 5d. 2 skeins thread,	—	This girl lives with her mother and 3 sisters. She gives her mother 6/- weekly towards her keep. She is about 22	8 A.M.—7 P.M. 1 hr. for dinner. Not much overtime Slack in	Worker has been in this firm 5 years. A new manager increased the work they used to put in the blouses, but did not increase the pay

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
		bell sleeves, linings and sew-on rib- bons		work is very slack some- times. On good work she may earn 15/-, but averages about 10/-.			
393	Good Medium	Trousers. A "maker" makes up for machinist, fixes bottoms, seams, seat, linings, &c. before the machining is done	Work- shop, 12 hands kept in all	Piecework rates, varies very much. Sometimes gets as much as 4/-, some- times 1/-. The middleman pays the workers ac- cording to his takings, e.g., if he is to get 2/-, she has 1/-; the pres- ser and machinist are then to be paid. A machinist gets 3d. a pair. Slack from August to about a fort- night before Christmas. From Christ- mas to Easter slack	—	Takes 3½ hrs. to make a pair	Different prices for different orders by same em- ployer

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	<p>2½d., 1 reel do., 2½d. = 10½d. outlay in order to earn 12/- 1d. for hot water for tea; 2d. weekly for sweeping room and use of room for eating dinner.</p>	—	—	May and August and often on ¾ time	—
—	—	<p>Yes. Tickets since the inspector came round seeing whether tickets were given.</p>	<p>Single girl over 20, pays her mother 8/6 a week.</p>	<p>8-8. 1½ hrs. for meals. 8-4. No meal-time on Saturday, but she is the youngest and leaves off for lunch</p>	<p>A very sensible girl, said the workers were mostly married women. Men were kept for pressing, &amp;c. Only two rooms, not a nice neighbourhood, but the work-rooms were all right. Spoke well of her master and said he was very fair to them. They do some contract work in slack times.</p>



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
276	Bespoke work for a middleman. Probably medium	Machining of trousers	In employer's work-room. Also at home	Piecework rates at home. $1/3$ or $1/6$ for a pair of trousers	Time wages by the day or portion of day in the work-room. Piecework at home. Not regular in work-room. $3/6$ or $4/$ per day		Am not quite certain but believe that the different prices represent different kinds of garments
277	Medium and cheap	Coat machinist. All the machining in youth's and men's coats	Factory	Piecework rates: $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ and $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ youths' stock, $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ and $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ men's do. $7d.$ youth's specials, $10d.$ men's do. She considers $13/-$ to $15/-$ a good week's money, $8/-$ a bad week. $15/-$ to $18/-$ is the best a girl can earn in the busy season	—	Could not give any idea of output as coat passes through her hands several times before it is finished	—
263	Medium	Machining coats of different kinds, long coats with velvet collars, $\frac{3}{4}$ length cloth coats and short coats	Workshop	Piecework rates, (a) $\frac{3}{4}$ length coats, $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ and $8d.$ each; (b) long coats with velvet collars, $8d.$ , $9d.$ , and	—	(a) $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours to do one. (b) 4 hours to do one. (c) 4 in day	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
	When working at home no doubt finds cotton and machine	No, but knows the price beforehand	Married woman, husband, a labourer, often out of work. Children. Lives in a poor and dilapidated house in a bad neighbourhood. Not clean but very intelligent and well mannered. Both she and her husband are London born Irish Roman Catholics. Rent 6/6 for two rooms	When working inside hours would be 8-8	
No	No	—	Single, about 20 years of age. Father in a trade, but his wages have lately fallen 15/- a week. There are 7 children, 4 now working	8.30-7 P.M. 1 hr. and 20 min. for meals Not much overtime but nearly 6 months slack time, although they have not as much as in some firms	—
No	—	—	Single girl about 16 years of age. Lives with mother and brother. They support mother between them. The brother has a trade, but only has casual work	9-8. 1½ hrs. for meals. Can go home for dinner	—

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
140	High Class	Makes trou- sers com- pletely. As far as inves- tigator under- stood she does not always make the whole of any pair, although she can do all the parts, but that the dif- ferent women "work in with one an- other" as she says	Em- ployer's workshop; a middle- man	10d. ; (c) short coats, 7d. each. About 2½d. an hour. Her last 3 weeks' earnings have been s. d. 10 0½ 8 9 9 1½ She has only been at this shop about 4 months	Time wages, but some workers in the same work- shop are piece- workers. 24/ a week. Did not say whether the work was regular or not ; but West End bespoke work is always liable to slack times	—	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	No	—	<p>—earns about 20/- weekly. Rent 4/6. The mother brought up 9 children—for many years after her husband's death—by doing mantle work at home. She worked for good firms and taught the girl the business. She has now heart disease and cannot work any more</p> <p>Either married or a widow. Young woman, looked worn. In mourning</p>	8-8, 8-4 Saturday	—

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
159	Cheap	Finishing trousers, very cheap work. Sews on buttons, turns up bottoms of the trousers, sews on flaps	Home	Piecework rates, 7d. per dozen for finishing trousers, about 1½d. an hour.	—	Can do 1 doz. from 8 A.M.—1 P.M., 5 hours	She says the middleman for whom she works pays better than any one in the neighbourhood. She worked for another who gave her 6d. a dozen for same work; and at one time wanted to make it 5d. a dozen, but the workers struck. She told this story to the clergyman some time ago, who went personally to the employer, and found what she said was quite correct
338	Medium	Buttonholes in coats	Work shop	Piecework rates: ½d.	—	About 6 in one	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No.	No	Yes	Widow, about 40 years of age. This woman and her four children live in one room. Investigator did not see room as interview was in the street. She was left a widow many years ago with 6 children, two are away from home, 1 girl at home makes about 7/- weekly. Rent 4/-. The other three children are still at school	When she has work works night and day and Sundays —there is much slack time in the winter	Was afraid to give particulars at first as she feared very much to lose the little work she has
No	Thread	—	Single, young girl about 17 or 18 years	8-8, 1½ hrs.	Investigator did not see the girl, but her



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		and waist-coats		each button-hole in coats. 4d. a dozen holes in waist-coats. 3d. an hour		hour at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each.	—
189	Medium	Fancy waist-coats of all kinds, no cloth work. Each waist-coat has four pockets. Some have braid. Winter ones are lined with flannel, no buttonholes, no pressing	Home	Piecework rates: fancy waistcoats, 4 pockets, $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, trimmed with braid 8d., fancy waistcoats, lined flannel, 6d. and 7d. About 2d. an hour. Investigator took down an old wages book, about 2 years old, it shows a fair wage. She tells us that her firm can keep her busy nearly all the year. Very little slack time except just at Christmas time. When she has made 18/- and 20/- weekly it really means almost $1\frac{1}{2}$	Was an indoor hand before her marriage for 3 years and had 15/- weekly before she left	3 to 4 and 5 in day.	

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Machine 1/- weekly, almost paid up. 1000yds. of cotton 2d., earns 6/- worth of work	Yes, tickets on each bundle of work	<p>of age. Father a tailor, there are 7 children in family, 2 working, 1 son with father and this daughter. Mother complains that times are very bad and that the work of both her husband and daughter is very slack. Rent, 15/- weekly</p> <p>Married woman with 6 small children. Husband only very casual work, laborer, carter, 13 hrs. work 3/6. Rent 6/4 weekly. Untidy, dirty home. One child not at school very delicate and dirty. If she could sit at the work she could earn good money, but with so many children it is impossible for her to work very steadily at it.</p>	<p>for meals.</p> <p>She tries to work 5 or 6 hours a day now as her husband's money rarely does more than pay the rent</p>	<p>mother knew all about her work. Very respectable Jewish family, 1 young daughter about 14 trying to go into the Civil Service</p> <p>—</p>

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.																																																																								
				<p>weeks' work, for she worked up to mid- night every night in order to make this amount.</p> <p><i>Wages Book.</i> 34 weeks.</p> <table><tr><td>s.</td><td>d.</td><td>s.</td><td>d.</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>7</td><td>18</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>15</td><td>8½</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>4½</td><td>16</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>18</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>16</td><td>0</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>8</td><td>15</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>15</td><td>6½</td><td>14</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>15</td><td>5½</td><td>14</td><td>5½</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>4½</td><td>9</td><td>3½</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>8</td><td>11½</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>9</td><td>11</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>3½</td><td>10</td><td>9½</td></tr><tr><td>15</td><td>2½</td><td>19</td><td>7½</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>2</td><td>14</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>21</td><td>9</td><td>16</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>0</td><td>15</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>6½</td><td>12</td><td>2</td></tr></table> <p>Total £21 19s. 8½d. Average over 34 weeks, 12/11½</p>	s.	d.	s.	d.	9	7	18	5	5	4	15	8½	6	4½	16	6	7	7	18	4	16	0	5	5	8	8	15	6	15	6½	14	10	15	5½	14	5½	3	4½	9	3½	10	11	8	11½	13	9	11	4	12	3½	10	9½	15	2½	19	7½	9	2	14	2	21	9	16	6	13	0	15	2	18	6½	12	2			
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222	Cheap	Trouser finisher. Buttons barring buttonholes and pockets (not making buttonholes, they are machine made in these cheap trousers). In the factory	Large Factory	Piecework rates: finish- ing 1 pair trousers, 2½d. 2d. an hour. Sometimes "specials" at 3½d. and 3½d. If "sewn round" but- tons, 4d. About 10/- a week is her	—	Hard work to do one pair in one hour, might do 2 pairs in 2 hours, but could not keep this up	Worked in a city firm for 16 years, there she had 9d. a pair for finishing for that she did what she does now plus																																																																								



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	3 skeins of twist, 3d., 3 reels of cotton, 3d. do 10/- worth of work. Sometimes soap. Have	—	Widow, nearly 70 years of age. Lives quite alone in a spotlessly clean room for which she pays 3/0½ rent weekly. Has never had any help from any one. Her children are all settled, but she rarely sees them except a daughter who is married and	8-7. 1 hr. meal. No tea time. 1 P.M. on Saturday. Not much slack time in comparison with smaller places of	This woman tells investigator that in her factory there are not more than 4 or 5 women who can take a pair of trousers from the machinist and finish right out. She says finishing is not properly taught now as it was years ago. She says she could

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages, per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		they are called "fellers"		average. She had a lot of trousers home to do when visited. She could not possibly live on the work she does during the factory hours, so she brings home work every night and rarely goes to bed before 11 or 11.30 P.M.			button-holes and pockets
51	Very cheap	Very cheap servants' print dresses; low class woollen skirts and black dresses. Machine made except for finishing. When seen was making servants' cheap print dresses (which she thought would be sold wholesale at about 2/11½d.). Yoke was stitched on back of bodice and two buttonholes were made before she got the work, otherwise she has to finish	Home; visited periodically by sanitary inspector "who does not like them to have bed in work-room"	Piece wages averaging 8/- a week, when work is plentiful (there is none to speak of in autumn and winter. Last winter they were 6 months without). Servants' dresses as described 4/- a dozen. For similar skirts alone she gets 2/- a dozen. Black dresses are paid at the same rate, but those she has to press too. At the best, working very hard the indoor work-	—	—	Works for only-one employer. Prices have gone down; 5 years ago when she started, she would get 5/- a dozen for this sort of dress

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
	lighter trousers in colour then have to buy extra cotton, &c., the right colour		poor. Her husband is dead many years, but she always took in tailoring. She educated her two sons well, one is a dispenser in a hospital, none of them give her any assistance	work. Never has a week without some work	make more money in some of the smaller places round but in this place there is not much slack time, which is a great consideration, although there are many bad weeks in the winter when she makes very little
No	Cotton costs 6d. a week. Rent of machine 1/6	Yes. Saw card with particulars	Rent (2 rooms) 5/- a week. Workroom fairly clean and airy. Three unmarried sisters living together in very poor street. Evidently badly off since father's death 5 years ago. Third sister works indoors at same rates, but with better pay because her work is more regular. One sister is incapable of work (? feeble minded) and investigator's informant has to stay at home to look after her	Works from 8.30 -8, with some stoppages A little work done on Fridays, but not much	The wholesale dealer is a good master but work is very irregular



No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
210	High class	<p>dress completely, line bodice, put on 8 hooks, put in sleeves, and make 8 seams in skirt (narrow width material)</p> <p>Entirely hand work, making tucks, inserting lace, &amp;c., only does the sleeves of the blouse. The sleeves are made entirely by the sleeve hands and put into the blouses by the girls who make the body part</p>	Workshop. Very high class firm	<p>ers' pay rises to 13/-, but this is seldom. There are the same rates indoor, but the work is more regular</p> <p>—</p>	<p>Time wages regular 10/- weekly</p>	—	—
93	Medium	Tailored coats and skirts—retailing from 15/- to 3 or 4 guineas. For a good coat	Factory	Piecework rates formerly coats and skirts, 2/- to 3/-. Children's costumes, 8d.	Time wages, now. Piece-work rates for—	Children's costumes 3 in day. Coat and skirt in day or	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
1d. if late in morning	No, only needles	—	Single, a girl about 19 years of age. She lives with her parents who she tells me are comfortably off. She gives mother her money	8.30-7 P.M. $\frac{3}{4}$ hr. for dinner. $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. for tea. Very little overtime	This girl learned the blouse making at a high class firm. She was there about a year. The firm failed and she went to her present place where she has been for 15 months. She speaks well of this firm. The workers have a nice room for tea—which they supply—and also very airy nice workrooms. All blouses are made almost entirely by hand. They have only two machines in the blouse room and these are only used to do the long seams. Tucks, &c., are all hand made. A good blouse hand can earn up to 25/- weekly. The best sleeve hand in this girl's room has 21/- weekly
No	Power, 6d. in the £	Each style of costume has a different number,	Single, about 20 years old. Very respectable looking girl, lives with parents, gives mother what she can towards support	9-7.45 $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. for meals. No over-time. Some e-	A pieceworker makes better money than a time worker. This girl served her time first in E.'s, then went on to F.'s firm.

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		and skirt gets 2/- to 3/-. Children's costumes, 8d. each. $\frac{3}{4}$ length coats with cased seams 1/1-. each. Special orders 1d. or 2d. more each article. Worker makes but does not finish		each. $\frac{3}{4}$ length coats, 1/1 each. 3d. and 4d. an hour	merly. Time worker in machine room. averages 7/-, 8/- weekly. Piece-worker can make 16/- and even with two days short has made 10/-	a little more according to work on it. $\frac{3}{4}$ coats, 3 in day pay well	
71	Medium	Bodice hand	Workshop	—	Time wages; work fairly regular Slack about 6 weeks in year. 16/-. During a period of 6 years had the following rate: as app., 2/6, improver, 5/- for 12 months. Then 7/6, 10/- 12/-, 16/	—	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
		always same price for same work		times slack	She finds piecework best pay. She worked in cutting room at 6/- weekly and in machining room at 7/- and 8/-. She says the forewoman is very fair and does not pay good and bad workers alike. If the work put in a garment is not good the worker gets something taken off the money
No fines. If late money is deducted from over-time pay	—	—	Single. Very superior girl; lives with parents who seem very well to do. Pay £40 a year rent for house and let top floor. Supports herself entirely	Not much overtime, only at end of busy season. 4d. an hour paid for it. Hours 8.30—7.30, 1½ hrs. for meals. Tea is provided and is very good	This girl has no complaints to make and thinks she earns a fair wage

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
94	Medium	<p>Skirt hand only. <i>At former place "C."</i></p> <p>(a) 7-gored skirt joined up, raised seams, 10 rows stitching round front and a tape on each seam.</p> <p>(b) 7-gored skirt joined up 7 bands round skirt.</p> <p>(c) skirt, 7-gored, one row of stitching.</p> <p>"B's" mostly plain costumes here, she does the skirts</p>	Workshop	<p><i>At former place, "C,"</i></p> <p>(a) 2½d. each.</p> <p>(b) 7½d. each.</p> <p>(c) 1½d. each.</p> <p>Worst pay of all. About 2d. an hour. Was on time work in this firm at first at 9/- and then 10/-. They decided to put all hands on piecework, which they did. By working hard she could only earn 6/- and 7/-, weekly, so she left and went back to her old place "B's"</p>	<p>may rise to 22/- weekly</p> <p>"B's." <i>Now on Time wages.</i> Not very regular, a lot of slack time. 8/6 weekly. A few weeks ago she and the other worker complained of getting so much slack time, so he offered them 1/9 daily, they struck and got 2/- daily, so this is how they are working at present. Over-time begins at 3d. an hour.</p>	<p>"C's." (a) from 1 to 1½ hrs to do (b) 3 hrs. to do</p>	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	No	—	Single, 19 years of age. Very respectable girl, lives with parents and gives mother 6/- weekly towards her keep	8.30—7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals. Not much overtime gets 3d. an hour for it	This girl learned her trade thoroughly with a relative. She then went to B's, a middleman working with his wife and 2 hands for a City firm. He gave her as improver for one year, 6/-8/- weekly. Then went to C's as assistant skirt hand, but left on account of prices being so low. B, on her return only gave her 8/6 as work was so bad. According to this girl, 9/- to 10/- weekly seem to be the best wages in the workshops round her district



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
					Work comes in rushes, sometimes very slack and sometimes a lot of over-time, for which they are thankful		
299	Medium	All kinds of children's sailorsuits. Some with braid round collar and some quite plain. Machinist	Factory	Piecework rates : 4/-, 6/- 7/- a dozen suits. 4/- a dozen plain with no braid on collar or cuffs. 6/- 7/- more elaborate. 7/- a dozen larger size. About 3d. an hour. Slack during winter, but never entirely put off. To do 5 suits a day at 6/- was good and quick work	—	Can do 5 suits in day at 6/- a dozen	—
345	Medium	Children's coats of all kinds, both for boys and girls. (a) White coat for child about 6 years old.	Home	Piecework rates : (a) 3½d. each. (b) 3d. each. (c) 4d. each. Cape alone took ½ an hr. (d) 1/- each.	—	(c) Cape alone took half an hour. (d) 1 day to do 1 dress	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Something is deducted for use of power, but worker does not know how much. Cotton 9d. worth does about 12/- worth of work. Fares 2d. daily	Yes	Single, girl about 17 or 18 years of age. Lives with parents and gives what she can towards support. Rent, 7/6	—	This girl was not very anxious to give information. Work was given out assorted, so that in a day worker might have one or two suits at all the different prices
—	Has 2 machines (1 daughter helps in work). Pays 3/- weekly on machines	Particulars are given. Sketches on pieces of card-board, quite	Married, middleaged woman, has 7 girls and 1 boy. 3 or 4 of them now earning. Her husband is in fairly constant work, nice home, 1 room used entirely as a	Works long hours when she has work to do	This is a superior ladylike woman, who has been working for many years at needlework. The girls' sailor suits she had from a well-known firm, but the

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
305	Medium	<p>Made of a kind of woolly cloth, 2 capes and deep turn over collar, lined throughout, 3 buttons.</p> <p>(b) Boys' sacque coats, double-breasted with belt round waist.</p> <p>(c) Young children's coats with 5 rows of gathered silk on cape.</p> <p>(d) Girls' Sailor suits, 36 inches long pleated skirt, braid round sailor collar and skirt</p>	Factory	<p>When they can get enough work to last 2 or 3 days, it pays fairly well, but when they have to go up almost daily and pay 7d. each time and wait some times, it is hardly worth while. Investigator thinks the mother and daughter could make 15/- between them in the week</p>	—	<p>(a) Can do 1 blouse in 1 hour and 10 minutes.</p> <p>(b) Can do 4 blouses in 1 day easily</p>	<p>Her former firm (also a factory) gave this worker 6d. a blouse for exactly the same blouse she now has 1/- for</p>
316	Cheap	This worker has given up	Home	Piecework rates: (a) 1/-	—	(a) Could do 6 in	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
	Cotton. Fares to fetch work, 7d. each time return	clear. Sometimes prices are not given before-hand, but she generally knows what she is going to get	workroom with 2 machines in it. Rent 9/-		price was so bad that she refused to take any more from this firm.
—	Traveling, 4d. daily. Cotton, 7d. earns about 16/-—18/-	—	Single, girl about 20 years of age. Very comfortable home. Father is a furrier by trade, has had no work since March, says trade has gone to America. There are 8 children, 4 earning. Mother says 2 of the girls are milliners, badly paid and very long hours, but she cannot afford to take them away from the business	9-7. 1½ hrs. meals. Comfortable meal room	This was a very nice looking well-dressed girl—rather anæmic looking. She is well pleased with her present employer, says the place is much better in every way than her former factory. There, prices have gone down latterly.
No	Owns machine	Told particulars	Married, this woman is middle aged with	Used to work	This woman gave up blouse work—the

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
318	Medium and Cheap.	<p>work for some time, owing to bad prices. She did:</p> <p>(a) Shirt blouses, 12 tucks each side of box pleat, shirt band collar, stiff or plain cuff with tucks, sometimes a detachable guard's collar, hooks and eyes, sets of 3 silk buttons each side of box pleat.</p> <p>(b) different other kinds of blouses.</p> <p>At Factory (a) mostly silk merve blouses with 6 tucks down front, 4 rows of insertion and 3 tucks between the rows of lace, on each side of front, 8 tucks and insertion in back.</p> <p>(b) some more elaborate.</p> <p>(c) some made of better silk but not so much work as in (a)</p>	<p>Factory now. Formerly workshop for Middle-woman</p>	<p>a dozen; (b) some at <math>\frac{2}{3}</math> and <math>\frac{1}{9}</math> a dozen. About 1d. an hour</p> <p>Piecework rates: (a) 6d. each; (b) 1/1 each; (c) <math>8\frac{1}{2}</math>d each. <i>Middle-woman</i>. (e) 7d. each</p>	<p>Formerly time. regular 11/- weekly</p>	<p>day working 6 hours</p> <p>(a) can do 4 in day. (b) can do 1 in day. (c) can do 4 in day</p> <p>(e) did 4 in <math>1\frac{1}{2}</math> days thus earning <math>2\frac{1}{4}</math></p>	—

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
	Cotton, needles	shown sample	6 children. 1 girl is in laundry and 2 others at work. Husband is in casual work. Rent 11/-, let rooms.	about 6 hours daily	prices were so low. She says the middle-woman told her she only had 1/3 a doz. from the factory for the blouses she gave this worker at 1/- a doz. The work she said was very uneven, very often there would be more work on blouses at 1/- a doz. than on those at 1/9. Price varied according to quality of material
No	All found at factory Had to supply cotton at middle-woman's	Middle-woman would not tell workers what they were going to have for blouses described as (e). This girl expected at least 9d. each but after working on them for 1½ days she	Single, about 17 years of age. Father has been out of work owing to an accident. For 6 months he had something weekly from his employer, but he signed a paper just before Xmas and took a lump sum of £15. They have been struggling to get along since. There are 9 children. Rent 10/6	9-7. 1½ hrs. meals 9-1 Sat.	This is rather a silly girl, whose mother complains that she goes out a lot in the evenings. She cannot afford to pay fares to town, so walks both ways—it takes her an hour each way. On wet days she goes by tram, 1d. each way. Was in service for a short while after being at a factory where she was on time wages, the work there was very regular, very little slack and they were paid for holidays.



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239	Medium	<p>For middle-woman. (e) 9 large tucks and strapping in front, 6 half-inch tucks at each side of front, 15 tucks in back, 2 wide and 4 pin tucks in each cuff and collar</p> <p>Worker is a forewoman. Skirts of different kinds, mostly cloth tailored skirts with tucks or pleats. This firm only makes skirts, no coats. The skirts are sold to wear with blouses. This worker does the basting of the skirts for the machine and is responsible for the work being turned out well. She has the highest wages paid in the shop and expects she will get more as she is a conscientious worker and has made her-</p>	Workshop	—	<p>Time wages, regular 18/- weekly. About 4 weeks slack time in year. In this shop a machinist can rise to 17/- weekly, a finisher to 10/- weekly. This worker is forewoman over 16 girls, she may rise to 20/- or even more</p>	—	—

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	No	<p>only got 2/4 for 4 blouses. She left after this and is now in a better place</p> <p>—</p>	<p>Single, about 24 years of age. Saw worker at club. She lives with parents and supports herself</p>	<p>8.30-7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals. No over-time, but very often kept till 8 P.M. About 4 weeks slack time in year</p>	<p>She began with a middlewoman</p> <p>This girl speaks very well of her employer. She has been in the firm 10 years, it was the first place she went to. He keeps his girls on if they want to stay and gives them 1/- rise each year up to a certain wage. They have no fines or expenses and are allowed to make tea in the afternoon. All the girls can go home to dinner and the employer takes this into account as they have no travelling expenses nor the expense of buying food out</p>

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62	High Class	self valuable to her employer Works at bodices only	Workshop	—	Time wages. Work is fairly regular. There are 4 slack months in the year, Sept., Nov., Jan. and Feb. Out of these worker is about 8 weeks without work. Worker is 18 years old and now earns 15/- weekly. She was improver at 5/- weekly for 12 months. In all she has worked 3 years, last 2 years her earnings have	—	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No fines or deductions	Needles only	—	Single, lives with mother and sister in 3 rooms, very comfortable and clean	Worker is paid 4d. an hour overtime. If a girl is receiving under 10/- weekly, overtime is 2d. an hour. 8.30-7.30 P.M. 1½ hrs. meals	This girl learned her trade from a friend almost entirely. She went to her first place as "improver." She tells me she has done very well as most girls of her age in the workroom only earn 10/- or 12/- weekly

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252	High Class	Bodice hand, does all kinds of bodices, both for day and evening wear	Work- shop	—	been 7/6 -12/-, and now 15/- weekly. She can rise to 22/- weekly  Time wages. Regular 18/- weekly	—	—
259	Medium	Fitter and Skirt hand. Fits the skirts on figures and is responsible for the turn- ing out of the skirt	Factory		Time wages. Regular From what investi- gator gathered about 18/- or 20/- weekly	—	—

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	No Travel-ling, 2d. daily	—	Single, 21 years of age. Lives at home with parents who keep a small shop. Supports herself and gives her mother a certain sum weekly. Very comfortable home	9-7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals Tea given. A good deal of overtime in the rush seasons. No extra money for over-time	Worker began in this firm and worked her way steadily up till now she is a bodice hand. She speaks well of the firm—there is not a great deal of slack time. She has been there about 7 years
No	No	—	Single, a woman about 25 or 27 years of age. Lives with mother and helps to support her. They give what they can towards rent and support to the relative with whom they both live. This worker says she practically supports herself and mother. It is a comfortable, clean house. Rent, 10/- weekly	8.30-7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals. Can get home for dinner. No over-time and no slack time so she says	This woman has worked at this place for 10 years. She worked on mantles for a short time, then went to this factory as improver at 10/- weekly. She says she was determined to get on, in spite of the jealousy of a forewoman, who has since left. This forewoman was annoyed because the head asked who made a certain skirt, as it was the best skirt ever sent out of the factory. The skirt was made by this worker. Since



No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
82	Medium	<p>(a) Little coats of white figured alpaca lined throughout. These have yokes, skirt, sleeves, capes, collar and fancy cuffs. There are 4 rows of braid on cape, 3 on collar, 2 on cuffs. Machines throughout.</p> <p>(b) Sample coats copied from Paris models.</p> <p>(c) Some other coats that take 2 hours. Coat described under (a) is believed to be sold retail at 21/9. Sample coats, selling price of model was 4 guineas</p>	Home in living-room	<p>Piecework rates: (a) 7½d. (b) 1/ each. Selling price of the model was four guineas. (c) other coats 4½d. Taking her day as 10 hours she earns on the 7½d. coats 2½d.; on the 4½d. coats 2¼d.; on the 1/3 samples, supposing she made 1½ in 10 hours, 2½d. per hour. All these, less charges. Her average wage for the last few weeks has been 6/-. By working to 11 at night she can earn 12/-</p>	—	<p>(b) There was so much work in these sample coats that she could not do nearly two in the day. (c) 2 hrs. Of the 7½d. coats she can, working long hours make 3 in day of the coats at 4½d. she can make one in two hrs.</p>	It does not appear so. Works for only one employer at present

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No	Machine, cotton, needles (and some linings break a great many) light, fuel for pressing, time spent in taking work to and fro. Sometimes fares. Also pays more rent in order to have a second room which she would do without, but for the work	Do not know	Married, husband in asylum, girl of 13 still at school. Child delicate. Worker is not in receipt of Poor Law relief or any other additions to earnings, has child to keep. Rent 7/6 for 2 rooms	Some-times works very long hours	that she has worked her way up, getting a rise each year—now she is fitter and skirt hand. She seems to think that any woman can earn a good living at this factory if she works steadily; of course the hours are long and it is hard work, but on the whole she considers they pay very fairly  Very superior, intelligent young woman. Is a skilled worker, has never had work returned for any fault. Has worked nearly four years. Says that the power machinists "inside" only make 3 coats at 7½d. in the day, but that, of course, their hours are shorter than hers. Her firm supplies several shops

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
33	High Class entirely for private orders	Worker is an assistant in bodice room	Work-room	—	Time wages: Work is fairly regular, but there is a certain amount of slack time and over-time. 12/- weekly	—	—
292	Includes various sorts	All sorts of children's frocks and coats	Home	Piecework rates: (a) for a child's frock of one pattern 3/- each. (b) "American" coats in piqué 2½d. or 3d. each, according to size. This she considers too low a rate	—	(a) Frock takes her all day	Only works for one employer
300	Medium	Cutting out children's clothes	Factory	—	Time wages regular 9/- weekly	—	—
243	Medium	Skirts of various kinds.	Workshop	—	Time wages	—	—



Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
No fines or deductions in this firm	Needles, scissors, thimbles for personal use. Dinners warmed free of charge or cooked 2 days in the week. Tea given free	—	Single, lives with married sister to whom she pays 9/- weekly. Out of that money her sister provides her with her daily dinner	—	The girl looks well. She seems interested in her work and is getting on well. She walks to and from her work
—	Finds cotton and machine. Fares once a week	—	Lives with parents, single. Prosperous and very respectable household. Father in a position of trust. Girl looks delicate	—	Says work is fairly regular; but also says she doesn't mind it being slack at times, there are always things for her to do at home. Has taken no work this week because mother is away and she is keeping house for father and brother (or brothers)
No	No	—	Single, about 18 or 19 years of age. Lives with parents. Mother a hard drinker. Supports herself	9-7. 1½ hrs. for meals	This girl has been at this work 4 years and is now earning 9/- weekly. She began with 3/- and has steadily worked up. She says a good cutter in this firm can make 18/- weekly. This she thinks is the highest wage possible in this department of the factory
No	No	—	Single girl about 21 years of age. Saw	8.30-7.30.	This girl has been 8 years in this firm.

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework ; Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work ; Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price Question 7.
402	Had various classes of work	<p>This girl was formerly a machinist, but she met with an accident (not at work) and could not machine again. Her employer put her on the pressing, which she has been doing for the last 2 years</p> <p>(a) Plain skirts, 3 tucks down front at <math>\frac{1}{2}</math>d. each. (b) <i>For firm G. &amp; H.</i>, coats at <math>5\frac{1}{2}</math>d. each. (c) <i>For firm M. &amp; N.</i>, silk coats with chiffon sleeves at <math>\frac{2}{3}</math>-, <math>\frac{2}{3}</math> and <math>2\frac{1}{6}</math> each</p>	Home	Piecework rates for (a) $1\frac{1}{2}$ each skirt (b) $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. each (c) $\frac{2}{3}$ -, $\frac{2}{3}$ , $\frac{2}{6}$ per coat. for (c) about $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. or rather more $\frac{1}{2}$ per hour	regular $13\frac{1}{2}$ - weekly About 4 weeks slack in year	(a) Could do 4 or 5 a week (c) Could do 3 in a day	Different prices for similar (but not identical) work from different employers
287	Medium	Night gowns of all kinds. In the summer flannel-ette ones, and in the winter white cotton. They do not do button-holes. Some gowns they have, at $\frac{3}{3}$ a doz., have turn - over	Home. has 2 employers, one in summer, and one in winter	Piecework rates: Flannelette gowns $\frac{2}{9}$ , $\frac{3}{3}$ -, $\frac{3}{3}$ , $\frac{4}{3}$ a dozen. White cotton $\frac{2}{6}$ , $\frac{2}{9}$ a doz. They average. $\frac{1}{6}$ a day each, working factory hours. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.-2d. an hour. Yearly	—	The two sisters working from 8-7.30 with time off for meals can do 1 doz. at $\frac{2}{9}$ , $\frac{3}{3}$	They tell me the work has gone down these last few years $\frac{3}{4}$ a doz. Formerly they had $\frac{3}{3}$ and $\frac{3}{6}$ for exactly the same

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	She finds cotton. Expenses of going to factory 2d. by tram	—	girl at club, she lives with parents and gives her mother a regular sum weekly for her support  Supports invalid mother. Single, mother and daughter living alone	Very little overtime—only work to 8 P.M. most days. 1½ hrs. for meals. Make tea at shop free of charge Can go home for dinner  Works long hours when there is a press of work	She was doing well as a machinist and thinks she would have been earning 16/- or 17/- weekly now, if she had not met with this accident. She has 13/- weekly at the pressing, she does not know if she will rise higher in time, but she hopes to go back to machining. Speaks well of her employer and says the girls all stay a long time in this business  Exceedingly respectable and intelligent woman. Good worker, able to cut out and fit. Could make a comfortable living if work were not slack at times
If they spoiled goods would have to pay cost-price of material	They own 2 machines Cotton 10d. weekly to earn between them 15/- -16/-	Have sketches for winter work. In summer particulars are written on tickets or sometimes sample given	The two working are both single women. There are 4 sisters living together; two go out to work and these two workers take in nightgowns. Their rent is 8/- weekly for a very nice house. They get it at this very low figure because it belongs to the Company for whom their	Regularly from 8-7.30 P.M. with an hour or so for meals	They think their employers very fair. If the material is cheap—although there is just the same work—they get less money. So that often there is exactly the same amount of work in nightgowns at 2/9 a doz. as in those at 3/3 a doz.



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
237	Medium	deep collars with frills around, 12 tucks, insertion and feather stitching  Buttonholes in shirts, mostly flannel shirts and tunics. The holes have to be cut with block and chisel	Factory	average about 15/- weekly between them  Piecework rates: (1) 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. one doz. shirts, 9 holes in each shirt. (2) 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. do. 7 holes. (3) 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. do. 9 holes. About 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. an hour. Last week her earnings were 19/1, out of that 1/- went for cotton and 2d. for woman. She can earn good money most of the time, 17/- to 18/- weekly	—	(1) 1 hr. (2) 1 hr. (3) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hr.	work as now they get 3/- a doz. for  —
183	Medium	Flannel shirts, all the same kind, plain band down front and short cuff	Factory	Piecework rates: Flannel shirts, machining only, 2/6 a dozen	—	Worker is only a beginner. 6 in one day	—
248	High Class	This girl is a shirt finisher. Does button-holes, sews on	Workshop for a middle-woman	Piecework rates: (1) 4d. one shirt = 1 doz. button-	—	(1) 2 hours' work. (2) good	—

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—			father worked for over 50 years		
—	2d. weekly to woman who runs errands and keeps up fire in kitchen. Girls cook their own meals. Cotton 4 reels 1/- earned 19/11	—	Single, about 22 years of age, lives alone with invalid father. She has to support both of them by her earnings. A married brother helps a little. Up to a few months ago they had some of her father's savings and some also from his clubs, but these are finished and so they will have only her earnings. Investigator suggested they might get help from the parish, but she said they did not want to ask for it as long as they could struggle on. Rent, 2 rooms 6/6 weekly	9-7. 1½ hrs. for meals. Little slack time, except holidays and stock-taking. Very little overtime	This girl learned the collar trade first, but could not earn more than 5/- to 6/- weekly at it. They have power machines in the factory where she now is, there is no charge, but she is told that they lowered the prices so as to pay for the power. She has been here one year and speaks well of the firm
—	Top cotton, 3d. under, 2d. = 5d. Earns about 6/- needles, machine, 2 for 1½d.	—	Single girl of 19 years of age. Lives with parents; 7 children at home, 3 married, 4 earning. Father in good trade, 2 other sisters and a brother in a factory. Gives mother all the money	9-7 P.M. 1½ hrs. meals. No over-time	Some girls can do one dozen or more daily, but she only began machining eight months ago and is not yet very quick
—	Cotton, 6d. Thread 2d. Mark-	—	Single girl, about 20 years of age	8.30-7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals	This girl can walk home for dinner. There is a great deal of slack time all

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework; Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		buttons, and puts in side pieces	supplying West end firms	holes and 1 pair side- pieces. (2) 4d. 1 doz. (button- holes, 3½d., 1 pr. side- pieces, ½d.). Initials in cross - stitch, 3d. 1 doz. 1 doz. side- pieces, 3d. Considers 14/- the best money she has ever taken. Many weeks of the year she makes 5/- and 6/-		hour's work	
332	Medium	Does not work now, but used to work for a middlewoman Did all kinds of under- clothing, cor- set covers for the middle- woman, other underclothing when in fac- tory. Corset covers, some plain and some with 4 tucks down each side of front, 8 tucks in back, small sleeve with 3 tucks round each, neck and sleeves edged with lace, draw- ing strings	Home and Factory	Corset covers, 2/6 to 4/- a doz. If with the aid of a sister they made 15/- each in a week it was very hard work. Kept an average for 6 months once and it worked out at 8/6 each weekly. A girl cannot earn more on piecework at underclothing than 15/- weekly, her average will be more likely 8/- or 9/- all the year round	—	Could do 1 doz. at 4/- in day (2 work- ing)	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	<p>ing cotton 2d. = 10d. to earn 12/-, 3d. weekly for room. Gas for making tea. They provide materials and do every- thing, washing up, &amp; c. them- selves.</p> <p>Machine at home. Cotton, needles. In one firm where prices were very bad had to buy pink cotton for pink work at 3d. a reel</p>	—	<p>Married woman of about 26. Husband is a trade unionist. She has not worked since her marriage</p>	—	<p>through winter. Sometimes they only have a couple of days' work in week. She does not bring work home, but often does a little for neighbours in the evening so as to earn a little more money.</p> <p>This worker, a very intelligent woman, told us about several firms for whom she used to work. In one where she worked some two years her weekly average was 8/-. Power was put in and all prices were lowered, so she left. After this she worked in a belt factory for some time. This paid fairly well, only the girls used to take bundles of belts home to do—foreman knew this and encouraged it. Worker com- plained when work- ing at home of having to deliver work to shop twice weekly between stated hours in the afternoon. This cut very much into the day's work,</p>



Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Owns machine. Cotton, 2½d. earns 3/-, 4/-.	—	Married middle aged woman, very respectable, clean and tidy. Has 3 little girls whom we saw all nicely dressed, clean and looked well fed. Husband very delicate, often in hospital with heart trouble and dropsy; when he is there she has had Poor Law relief. He is in a skilled trade and when in work earns good money, but has very long hours. Rent 6/-	Works late at night when she can get the work, but very slack just at present	as by the time they returned it was quite 6 P.M., too late to set to work. Was very glad to hear of the Trade Union for Women, as she said if the girls would only stick together the prices would often have been kept up  This woman says it is a great struggle to make ends meet. She is now behind with her rent, but except for an odd shilling her husband picks up, at present they are depending entirely on her work
—	—	—	Single woman of 23 years of age. Lives with parents, entirely supports herself. Very comfortable home	8.30-6.30. 1½ hrs. for meals	—



No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
341	Medium	Buttonholes in collars and cuffs made by hand. For this work a very small, fine needle is required and a special kind of cotton	Home for a middle-woman	<p>time has made 16/-, but averages 10/- 12/- weekly</p> <p>Piecework rates : 1 doz. collars, 36 holes, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math>. About <math>1\frac{1}{4}d.</math> an hour. Cuffs paid at same rate, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math> for 36 holes. If they do between them (3) 5 dozen in the day, <math>1/5\frac{1}{2}d.</math>, it is the most they do</p>	—	A very quick worker, can do 36 holes in 2 hrs., but could not keep this speed up. Average worker $2\frac{1}{2}$ –3 hrs. to do 36 holes, the mother says it takes her quite 3 hrs., but one of the young girls can do them in 2 hrs. It is very trying work to the eyes. She does not think any one can earn a living at it	1/- a doz. for the best for pressing
103	High Class and medium	Underskirts, silk petticoats; 5 frills on deep flounce, put on skirt, cord and hem.	Factory	Piecework rates : Silk skirts, 5 frills, $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ each; 7 frills, $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ each; moir-	—	At $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ , 3 in day. $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ 2 or 3. $13\frac{1}{2}d.$ , the quick work.	

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Needles and cotton. 6d. worth of cotton earns 7/- to 8/-.	—	Married middle aged woman whose husband is in prison just now. 6 children, 4 earning and 2 just leaving school. One has passed her Civil Service examination. One earns 18/-, one is employed by a friend, one a soldier away sends home money, and one is in good work. Rent 11/6. Very superior woman and very clean, well-furnished home	The mother and 2 daughters who have just left school, work odd hours.	This woman says she has had a great struggle to keep respectable since her husband has been away. She moved to a neighbourhood where no one knew them. They have a very superior house in one of the nicest streets of the neighbourhood, and seem to be getting on well. They do not sit at it constantly. Some months ago the middlewoman could get no work at all and had to turn her hands off and went herself into a factory for a time
If late may be locked out for an hour	Cotton and needles	—	Single, lives with parents and gives her mother what she can towards support	8.30-8 1½ hrs. for meals, no over-time.	This girl after her month's training was put on plain tops to skirts for which they had 1d. Could do 8 or 9 in

No.	High Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework; Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work; Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
387	Medium	<p>Silk petticoats 7 frills; silk moirette petticoats, hem, cord, tuck, pleated heading tuck in frill. Colored cotton petticoats</p> <p>All kinds of underclothing chemises, combinations and knickers. Sometimes nightdresses, but not often. Some are quite plain and some very elaborate with from 30 to 40 yards of lace and insertion on each garment</p>	Factory	<p>ette, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math> each Colored cotton <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math> each. <math>2d.</math> or <math>3d.</math> an hour. Can earn about 7/- 8/- weekly</p> <p>Piecework rates: combinations, <math>4/6</math> 5/- a dozen with 36 yards of lace on each one. Chemises, <math>2/6</math> a doz., 31 yards of lace on each garment. Knickers, <math>1/-</math>, <math>1/6</math> a dozen if plain; <math>7/6</math>, 8/- if with medallions and lace. On full time can earn <math>14/-</math>, <math>15/-</math>, but many weeks she only makes <math>4/-</math>, <math>5/-</math></p>	—	<p>Combinations, one dozen in <math>1\frac{1}{2}</math> days, sometimes 2 days. Chemises 1 doz. in day. Knickers plain, <math>1\frac{1}{2}</math> doz., 1 day. Elaborate 1 doz. in 4 days</p>	
104	High Class and medium	<p>Underskirts. Silk petticoats 5 frills on one flounce, silk petticoats, 7 do. Cotton and moirette. Silk moirette, hem and cord 1 tuck, pleated heading,</p>	Factory	<p>Piecework rates: (1) Silk skirts, 5 frills, <math>4\frac{1}{2}d.</math> (2) Silk skirts, 7 frills, <math>5\frac{1}{2}d.</math> (3) Moriette, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math> (4) Colored cotton, <math>3\frac{1}{2}d.</math> <math>2\frac{1}{2}d.</math> an hour.</p>	—	<p>(1) 3 daily (2) 2 or 3 daily. (3) 1 hour quick work (4) do.</p>	



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Stove money, 1½d. weekly. Power, 6d. in 20/- earned.	—	Single, about 19 years of age. Lives with parents, 10 children at home, 4 earning. Father in skilled trade. Very slack just now. Rent 9/-	9-7. 1½ hrs. for meals. Nice rooms for meals. Can cook dinners	a day. This was in another factory, remained 1½ years, and then went to present work, which she thinks much better. She is not a very good hand; thinks some girls can earn more
If late may be locked out for an hour	At her former firm cotton cost as much as 1/6 weekly if earnings were 9/-. Now 3d. weekly is	—	A respectable-looking girl of 19, living with her parents and giving her mother what she can towards home expenses	8.30-8. 1½ hrs. for meals. Not much overtime	This girl worked for 3 years in her former factory, treadle machines, which did not suit her. Now there are power machines. Thinks it is fairer to stop 3d. weekly for cotton as this factory does now. When there is

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Articles, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Vari- ations of Price. Ques- tion 7.
392	Medium	1 frill with one tuck          Underclothing finishes off garments, buttons, thread ribbons through the tops, &c., all hand work and sewing by hand	Wholesale ware- house	—	Time wages: 9/-. Began at 6/-, then rose to 7/-, then 9/-	—	—
92	High Class and medium	Underskirts. (1) silk skirts with frills. (2) best silk and net skirts sell for at least 4 guineas, 50 or 60 yards of silk to them to make rib- bons. 398 bows to tie, 21 sections of	—	Piecework rates : (1) 10d. each. (2) 4/- and 5/- each. 2d. to 4d. an hour	—	(1) 3 or 4 in a day. (2) One or part of one in a day	For tra- veller's samples they are paid at the rate of 4d. an hour

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	stopped, often a girl will use 5d. or 5½d. worth. Worker provides needles	—	Lives with her parents, a young girl of 17	8.45-6.30. Not allowed out. No meal-room provided	slack time, the forewoman tries to give every girl a little, so usually a girl can earn a little every day; rarely sent away for a day. Why cotton ran so high at the former factory was that they had to have so many different coloured spools for the cotton under skirts
—	Needles only. Fares probably 4d. daily	—	—	—	—
—	Power, under 5/- 2d., from 5/- to 10/- 4d., 10/- to 20/- 6d., over 20/-, 1/-	All particulars given	A very respectable single girl of about 21. Lives with parents and supports herself entirely	8.30-6.30. 1 hr. for meals. No over-time and not much slack time. Sometimes ½ day's work	A very anæmic little girl of 17, under a doctor now for anæmia. Said it was partly owing to her eating her meals on her machine and not being allowed to go out for air that she was ill. Had once left on account of illness, but the firm sent for her again. She was very happy in her place. Did not see much prospect of getting put on better work  This girl tells investigator that the work is so varied that it is difficult to get an average living wage. She tells me of one girl who used to earn 25/- in a West End workroom who became crippled owing to an illness, but can still work quite well and is at



## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High-Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework: Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work: Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		goffers. Make on tissue paper a good part of the trim- mings					
336	Medium	All kinds of men's shirt collars	Home for a factory	Piecework rates: 4/6, 5/-, 6/- a gross Averages 8/-, 9/- weekly	—	Two gross in a week at 4/6 a gross would be very hard work	This woman tells in- vestigator that in the last three years the price has gone down from 1/6 to 2/6 a gross on collars
269	Medium	Finishing frocks for babies, turn- ing up hems, felling sleeves, feather- stitching on necks and round cuffs. These frocks are short, not	Factory	Piecework rates: cash- mere frocks, oversewing sleeves, 2 loops and 2 buttons. Feather stitching neck and cuffs 1½d. Silk frocks. Bind-	Now on a regular time wage, From what investi- gator gathered about 12/- or	3 cash- mere frocks in an hour. 3 silk frocks in an hour.	—

Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Cotton, 2½ d. does 1 gross at 4/6. Starch. A special iron for pressing certain kinds of collars called "patent turn-overs"	—	Lives quite alone in one room, for which she pays 4/- weekly and is entirely dependent on her own earnings. She is a middle-aged widow. She kept an invalid husband by this work for 15 years, but she could not do it now at the prices given. She can barely support herself. She says 2 gross is a good week's work. The usual price is 4/6 a gross. Those at 5/6 and 6/- are more intricate collars with peaks, &c.		this factory at 9/- weekly, out of which she has to support herself and has to pay fares. A lot of old hands have left lately, as they say the pay is getting so bad for the amount of work they have to put into the various garments
—	1 d. weekly to a girl who sweeps the room every day but Saturday	—	Lives with a brother. Very nice house	8.30-8 P.M. 1½ hrs. meals Can get home for them	This worker is now an assistant to the forewoman. Marks the younger girls' books and gives out work to the other girls. She tells investigator that many of the young girls 14 or 15 years of age can make 10/-

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week or Day.	Output per Hour.	Variations of Price. Question 7.
		the long robes—they are made of silk or cashmere		ing armholes, 2 loops and 2 buttons. Feather-stitching neck and cuffs, 2d. About 4½d. an hour. Not much slack time in year. 10/- weekly, often 15/- weekly	14/- weekly, not more. Has no slack time and considers she is better off now, taking the whole year than formerly on piece-work		
366	Medium	All kinds of children's frocks, not the best work	Factory	Piecework rates: 2½d. each. About 3d. an hour if she had work. This worker averages about 6/-, 7/- weekly. One daughter, now married, used to do the best work and earned 16/- to 20/- weekly	—	One or a little more than one frock in an hour	—
247	High Class	Buttonholes on the best white linen collars	Home from a middle-woman, who takes it from a factory	Piecework rates: 36 holes (1 doz. collars) 3½d. About ¼ hour. Her best day's work is 8½d.	—	Can do about 2½ dozen collars in a day, 90 button-holes	—



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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	Her fares cost her 1½d. daily she walks home	—	Girl of 21. Single. Saw the mother who gave information. 8 children, 5 at home. Husband has a trade at home, small shop. He says his girls have kept him poor. Another girl 19 years old is on a weekly wage of 9/-, babies' millinery. His own work is precarious, some weeks very busy and some weeks nothing at all. The married daughter seemed to be the only prosperous one	9-7 or 7.30. 1½ hrs. for meals	weekly, finishing these frocks. She made the same herself when she began this work 4 or 5 years ago. She often made 15/- weekly
—	Cotton to be provided by worker	—	Married woman whose husband has a trade, but now he is getting old he cannot get steady work. He seems perfectly able-bodied and tells investigator	Works from early morning all day except to do a little house-work and	The mother says this girl gives her 6/6 weekly towards her support, some weeks she is so distressed because she has not got it to give. They won't allow the girls to come home even if there is no work, so that a girl may sit idle all day, while if she were at home she could be sewing for herself or even making some money by doing work for neighbours
					This worker and the daughter struggle to keep the home together and to keep her husband out of the house. They seem very deserving people and the hus-

## MAKERS OF OUR CLOTHES

No.	High- Class, Medium, Cheap.	Articles and Process.	Where done.	Piecework : Rates per Article, Dozen, &c.	Time Work : Wages per Week, or Day.	Output per Hour.	Varia- tions of Price. Question 7.
				She has rarely taken more			
339	Medium	All kinds of underskirts mostly moirette	Factory	Formerly on piecework rates. In one factory from 2/9 a dozen. Plain skirts with deep and small frill. Some more elaborate at 4/6 a dozen. About 3d. an hour, but the work was not regular and there was a lot of slack time. Some weeks she might not earn 3/-	Now takes time wages : 9/- weekly	Could do one doz. skirts of the plain kind daily More elaborate skirts about 5 or 6 in day	—

# TABULATED CASES

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Fines or Deductions.	Other Charges.	Particulars.	Family Conditions.	Hours and Over-time.	Remarks.
—	1d. weekly for tea and no other expenses now. Formerly when on piecework rates had to supply cotton. Her sister showed us a large box of reels of all colours, some hardly used at all. These had been left over when she left her last place	—	that but for his wife's and daughter's earnings he would be in the workhouse. He blames himself for giving up different jobs during his life and not sticking to one thing. He was in the Navy for many years. Last week he had 3 days work—he left home at 6 A.M. and returned home at 3 A.M., the following morning to leave again at 6 A.M. But even with these hours he would gladly go on. Rent, for 2 rooms 4/- weekly. Very clean home Lives with father, a widower and her married sister. Both in regular work	cooking. Always rises with her husband before 6 A.M.  8.30-7.1½ hrs. for meals	band looks well and strong enough to do a good day's work. She has only done this work since her husband's work has been so bad  The sister whom we saw had formerly been at the same work, and she remembered 7 or 8 years ago having 9/- a doz. for the same petticoats for which they are paid 4/6 a doz. now. She said they used constantly to have unorganised strikes when she was at work each time the prices were lowered, but they always had to go back at the governor's price. Her sister has earned on piecework rates as much as 20/- weekly, but the work was very irregular—a lot of slack time



## APPENDIX D

### A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE BOARDS FOR CERTAIN TRADES.

*Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed March 24, 1909.*

#### ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES.

##### *Establishment of Trade Boards for Trades to which the Act applies.*

###### Clause.

1. Application of Act to certain trades.
2. Power to establish Trade Boards for trades to which Act applies.
3. General duties of Trade Boards.

##### *Minimum Rates of Wages.*

4. Duties and powers of Trade Boards with respect to minimum rates of wages.
5. Order giving obligatory effect to minimum rates of wages.
6. Penalty for not paying wages in accordance with minimum rate which has been made obligatory.
7. Limited operation of minimum rate which has not been made obligatory.
8. Provision for case of persons employed by piece work where a minimum time-rate but no general minimum piece-rate has been fixed.
9. Prevention of evasion.
10. Consideration by Trade Board of complaints as to infraction of minimum rates.

##### *Constitution, Proceedings, &c. of Trade Boards.*

11. Constitution and Proceedings of Trade Boards.
12. Establishment of district trade committees.
13. Official members of Trade Boards.

##### *Appointment of Officers and other Provisions for enforcing Act.*

14. Appointment of officers.
15. Powers of officers.
16. Power to take and conduct proceedings.

##### *Supplemental.*

17. Regulations as to mode of giving public notice.
18. Expenses of Trade Boards.
19. Interchange of powers between Government Departments.
20. Short title and commencement.

##### SCHEDULE.

## A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE BOARDS FOR CERTAIN TRADES.

BE it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows (that is to say):—

### *Establishment of Trade Boards for Trades to which the Act applies.*

1.—(1) This Act shall apply to the trades specified in the schedule to this Act and to any other trades to which it has been applied by order of the Board of Trade made under this section. Application of Act to certain trades.

(2) The Board of Trade may make an order applying this Act to any specified trade to which it does not at the time apply if they are satisfied that the rate of wages prevailing in any branch of the trade is exceptionally low, as compared with that in other employments, and that the other circumstances of the trade are such as to render the application of this Act to the trade expedient.

(3) If at any time the Board of Trade consider that the conditions of employment in any trade to which this Act applies have been so altered as to render the application of this Act to the trade unnecessary they may by order declare that this Act shall not apply to that trade, and this Act shall cease to apply to that trade as from the date mentioned in the order.

(4) An order of the Board of Trade under this section shall not take effect until a draft thereof has lain for thirty days during the session of Parliament on the table of both Houses of Parliament, and if either House during those thirty days presents an address to His Majesty against the draft, no further proceedings shall be taken thereon, but without prejudice to the making of a new draft Order.

2.—(1) The Board of Trade may establish one or more Trade Boards constituted in accordance with regulations made under this Act for any trade to which this Act applies or for any branch of work in the trade. Power to establish Trade Boards for trades to which Act applies.

(2) Where a Trade Board has been established for any branch of work in a trade, any reference in this Act to the trade for which the Board is established shall be construed as a reference to the branch of work in the trade for which the Board has been established.



General  
duties of  
Trade  
Boards.

3. A Trade Board for any trade shall consider, as occasion requires, any matter referred to them by a Secretary of State, the Board of Trade, or any other Government department, with reference to the industrial conditions of the trade, and shall make a report upon the matter to the department by whom the question has been referred.

*Minimum Rates of Wages.*

Duties and  
powers of  
Trade  
Boards with  
respect to  
minimum  
rates of  
wages.

4.—(1) Trade Boards shall, subject to the provisions of this section, fix minimum rates of wages for timework for their trades (in this Act referred to as minimum time-rates), and may also, if they think fit, fix general minimum rates of wages for piecework for their trades (in this Act referred to as general minimum piece-rates), and those rates of wages (whether time- or piece-rates) may be fixed so as to apply universally to the trade, or so as to apply to any special process in the work of the trade or to any special class of workers in the trade, or to any special area.

If a Trade Board report to the Board of Trade that it is impracticable in any case to fix a minimum time-rate in accordance with this section the Board of Trade may so far as respects that case relieve the Trade Board of their duty.

(2) Before finally fixing any minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate, the Trade Board shall give public notice of the rate which they propose to fix and consider any objections to the rate which may be lodged with them within the time, not being less than three months, fixed for the purpose by the notice.

(3) The Trade Board shall give public notice of any minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate finally fixed by them.

(4) A Trade Board may, if they think it expedient, cancel or vary any minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate fixed under this Act, and shall reconsider any such minimum rate if the Board of Trade direct them to do so, whether an application is made for the purpose or not:

Provided that the provisions of this section as to public notice shall apply where it is proposed to cancel or vary the minimum rate fixed under the foregoing provisions in the same manner as they apply where it is proposed to fix a minimum rate.

(5) A Trade Board shall on the application of any employer fix a special minimum piece-rate to apply as respects the persons employed by him in cases to which a minimum time-rate but no general minimum piece-rate is applicable, and may as they think



fit cancel or vary any such rate either on the application of the employer or after notice to the employer.

5.—(1) Until a minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate fixed by a Trade Board has been made obligatory by order of the Board of Trade under this section, the operation of the rate shall be limited as in this Act provided.

Order giving obligatory effect to minimum rates of wages.

(2) After the lapse of not less than six months from the date on which a Trade Board have given public notice of any minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate finally fixed by them, the Trade Board by whom the rate has been fixed may, if they think fit, apply to the Board of Trade for an order making that minimum rate obligatory in cases to which it is applicable on all persons employing labour, and on all persons employed, and the Board of Trade, if having regard to the general opinion of the trade and to the other circumstances of the case they are satisfied that the making of an order in accordance with the application is expedient, shall make such an order.

(3) An application and order under this section may be made so as to cover not only the minimum rate in force at the time, but also any other minimum rate which may thereafter be substituted for that rate by the Trade Board and any other minimum time-rate or general piece-rate which may be fixed by the Board.

(4) Any order of the Board of Trade under this section shall take effect as from the date mentioned in the order, and may be limited, if the Board of Trade think it expedient, to any area specified in the order.

(5) Any order of the Board of Trade under this section shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after it is made, and the Board of Trade shall cause public notice to be given of the order.

6.—(1) Where any minimum rate of wages fixed by a Trade Board has been made obligatory by order of the Board of Trade under this Act, an employer shall, in cases to which the minimum rate is applicable, pay wages to the person employed at not less than the minimum rate, and if he fails to do so shall be liable on summary conviction in respect of each offence to a fine not exceeding *twenty pounds* and to a fine not exceeding *five pounds* for each day on which the offence is continued after conviction therefor.

Penalty for not paying wages in accordance with minimum rate which has been made obligatory.

(2) Any agreement for the payment of wages in contravention of this provision shall be void.

Limited operation of minimum rate which has not been made obligatory.

**7.—(1)** Where any minimum rate of wages has been fixed by a Trade Board, but is not for the time being obligatory under an order of the Board of Trade made in pursuance of this Act, the minimum rate shall have a limited operation as follows :

- (a) In all cases to which the minimum rate is applicable an employer shall, in the absence of a written agreement to the contrary, pay to the person employed wages at not less than the minimum rate, and, in the absence of any such agreement, the person employed may recover wages at such a rate from the employer ;
- (b) Any employer may give written notice to the Trade Board by whom the minimum rate has been fixed, that he is willing that that rate should be obligatory on him, and in that case he shall be under the same obligation to pay wages to the person employed at not less than the minimum rate and be liable to the same fine for not doing so, as he would be if an order of the Board of Trade were in force making the rate obligatory ; and
- (c) No contract involving employment to which the minimum rate is applicable shall be given by a Government department or local authority to any employer unless he has given notice to the Trade Board in accordance with the foregoing provision.

(2) A Trade Board shall keep a register of any notices given under this section :

The register shall be open to public inspection without payment of any fee, and shall be evidence of the matters stated therein :

Any copy purporting to be certified by the secretary of the Trade Board or any officer of the Trade Board authorised for the purposes to be a true copy of any entry in the register shall be admissible in evidence without further proof.

Provision for case of persons employed by piece work where a minimum time-rate but no general minimum piece-rate has been fixed.

**8.** An employer shall, in cases where persons are employed on piece work and a minimum time-rate but no general minimum piece-rate has been fixed, be deemed to pay wages at less than the minimum rate—

- (a) in cases where a special minimum piece-rate has been fixed under the provisions of this Act for persons employed by the employer if the rate of wages paid is less than that special minimum piece-rate ; and
- (b) in cases where a special minimum piece-rate has not been so fixed, unless he shows that the rate of wages paid would yield, in the circumstances of the case, to



an ordinary worker at least the same amount of money as the minimum time-rate.

9. Any shopkeeper, dealer, or trader, who by way of trade makes any arrangement express or implied with any worker in pursuance of which the worker performs any work for which a minimum rate of wages has been fixed under this Act, shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be the employer of the worker, and the net remuneration obtainable by the worker in respect of the work after allowing for his necessary expenditure in connection with the work shall be deemed to be wages. Prevention of evasion.

10.—(1) Any worker or any person on behalf of a worker may complain to the Trade Board that the wages paid to the worker by any employer in any case to which any minimum rate fixed by the Trade Board is applicable are at a rate less than the minimum rate, and the Trade Board shall consider the matter and may, if they think fit, take any proceedings under this Act on behalf of the worker. Consideration by Trade Board of complaints as to infraction of minimum rates.

(2) Before taking any proceedings under this Act on behalf of the worker, a Trade Board may bring the case to the notice of the employer, with a view to the settlement of the case without recourse to proceedings.

#### *Constitution, Proceedings, &c. of Trade Boards.*

11.—(1) The Board of Trade may make regulations with respect to the constitution of Trade Boards consisting of members representing employers and members representing workers (in this Act referred to as representative members) in equal proportions and of the official members. Constitution and proceedings of Trade Boards.

(2) Women shall be eligible as members of Trade Boards as well as men.

(3) The representative members shall be elected or nominated, or partly elected and partly nominated as may be provided by the regulations, and in framing the regulations regard shall be had to the desirability of the representation of home workers on Trade Boards.

(4) The chairman of a Trade Board shall be such one of the official members as the Board of Trade may appoint.

(5) The proceedings of a Trade Board shall not be invalidated by any vacancy in their number, or by any defect in the appointment, election, or nomination of any member.

(6) In order to constitute a meeting of a Trade Board at least one-third of the whole number of the representative members, and at least one official member must be present.



(7) The Board of Trade may make regulations with respect to the proceedings and meetings of Trade Boards, including the method of voting ; but subject to the provisions of this Act and to any regulations so made Trade Boards may regulate their proceedings in such manner as they think fit.

Establishment  
of district  
trade  
committees.

**12.—(1)** A Trade Board may establish district trade committees consisting partly of members of the Trade Board and partly of persons not being members of the Trade Board and constituted in accordance with regulations made for the purpose by the Board of Trade and acting for such area as the Trade Board may determine.

(2) Provision shall be made by the regulations for at least one official member acting as a member of each district trade committee, and for the proper representation of local employers and local workers on the committee and also for the appointment of a standing sub-committee to consider applications for special minimum piece-rates and complaints made to the Trade Board under this Act, and for the reference of any applications or complaints to that sub-committee.

(3) A Trade Board may refer to a district trade committee for their report and recommendations any matter which they think it expedient so to refer, and may also, if they think fit, delegate to a district trade committee any of their powers and duties under this Act, other than their power and duty to fix a minimum time-rate or general minimum piece-rate.

(4) Where a district trade committee has been established for any area, it shall be the duty of the committee to recommend to the Trade Board minimum time rates and general minimum piece-rates applicable to the trade in that area, and no such minimum rate of wages fixed under this Act and no variation or cancellation of such a rate shall have effect within that area unless either the rate has been recommended by the district trade committee, or an opportunity has been given to the committee to report thereon to the Trade Board, and the Trade Board have considered the report (if any) made by the committee.

**13.—(1)** The Board of Trade may appoint such number of persons (including women) as they think fit to be official members of Trade Boards.

(2) Such of the official members of Trade Boards shall act on each Trade Board or district trade committee as may be directed by the Board of Trade, and in the case of a Trade Board for a trade in which women are largely employed, at least one of the official members acting shall be a woman :

Official  
members  
of Trade  
Boards.

Provided that not more than three official members shall act on the same Trade Board at the same time.

*Appointment of Officers and other Provisions for enforcing Act.*

**14.—(1)** The Board of Trade may appoint such officers as they think necessary for the purpose of investigating any complaints and otherwise securing the proper observance of this Act, and any officers so appointed shall act under the directions of the Board of Trade, or, if the Board of Trade so determine under the directions or any Trade Board. Appointment of officers.

(2) The Board of Trade may also, in lieu of or in addition to appointing any officers under the provisions of this section, if they think fit, arrange with any other Government Department for assistance being given in carrying this Act into effect, either generally or in any special cases, by officers of that Department whose duties bring them into relation with any trade to which this Act applies.

**15.—(1)** Any officer appointed by the Board of Trade under this section, and any officer of any Government department for the time being assisting in carrying this Act into effect, shall have power for the performance of his duties, Powers of officers.

(a) to require the production of wages sheets by an employer and to inspect, examine, and copy the same ;

(b) at all reasonable times to enter any factory or workshop, and any place used for giving out work to outworkers ; and

(c) to inspect any list of outworkers kept by an employer.

(2) If any person fails to furnish the means required by an officer as necessary for any entry or inspection or the exercise of his powers under this section, or if any person hinders or molests any officer in the exercise of the powers given by this section, that person shall be liable on summary conviction in respect of each offence to a fine not exceeding *five pounds*.

**16.—(1)** Any officer appointed by the Board of Trade under this Act, and any officer of any Government department for the time being assisting in carrying this Act into effect, shall have power in pursuance of any special or general directions of the Board of Trade to take proceedings under this Act on behalf of any worker, and a Trade Board may also take any such proceedings in the name of any officer appointed by the Board of Trade for the time being acting under the directions of the Trade Board in pursuance of this Act, or in the name of their secretary or any of their officers authorised by them. Power to take and conduct proceedings.



(2) Any officer appointed by the Board of Trade under this Act, or any officer of any Government department for the time being assisting in carrying this Act into effect, and the secretary of a Trade Board, or any officer of a Trade Board authorised for the purpose, may, although he is not a counsel or solicitor or law agent, prosecute or conduct before a court of summary jurisdiction any proceedings arising under this Act.

*Supplemental.*

Regulations  
as to mode  
of giving  
public notice.

**17.—**(1) The Board of Trade shall make regulations as to the mode in which public notice is to be given of any matter under this Act, with a view to bringing the matter of which notice is to be given so far as practicable to the knowledge of persons affected, and where public notice of any matter is to be given under this Act, it shall be given in the manner provided by those regulations.

(2) Every occupier of a factory or workshop, or of any place used for giving out work to outworkers, shall, in manner directed by regulations under this section, fix any notices in his factory or workshop which he may be required to fix by the regulations, and shall give notice in any other manner, if required by the regulations, to the persons employed by him of any matter of which public notice is to be given under this Act :

If the occupier of a factory or workshop, or of any place used for giving out work to outworkers, fails to comply with this provision he shall be liable on summary conviction in respect of each offence to a fine not exceeding *forty shillings*.

Expenses  
of Trade  
Boards.

**18.—***There shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament—*

- (1) *Any expenses, up to an amount sanctioned by the Treasury, which may be incurred with the authority or sanction of the Board of Trade by Trade Boards or their committees in carrying into effect this Act; and*
- (2) *To official members of Trade Boards and to officers appointed by the Board of Trade under this Act such remuneration and expenses as may be sanctioned by the Treasury; and*
- (3) *To representative members of Trade Boards and members (other than official members) of district trade committees any expenses (including compensation for loss of time), up to an amount sanctioned by the Treasury, which may be incurred by them in the performance of their duties as such members.*



19.—Any powers to be exercised or duties to be performed by the Board of Trade under this Act may, with the consent of the Board of Trade and in their stead, be exercised or performed generally or in any special cases by any other Government Departments, and this Act shall apply, so far as respects the exercise or performance of any such powers and duties as if the Government department by whom they are for the time being exercised or performed in pursuance of this section were substituted for the Board of Trade.

Interchange  
of powers  
between  
Government  
Departments.

20.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Trade Boards Act, 1909.

Short title  
and com-  
mencement.

(2) This Act shall come into operation on *the first day of January nineteen hundred and ten.*

### SCHEDULE.

#### TRADES TO WHICH THE ACT APPLIES WITHOUT SPECIAL ORDER.

1. Ready-made and wholesale bespoke tailoring.
2. Cardboard box making.
3. Machine-made lace and net finishing.
4. Ready-made blouse making.



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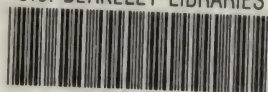
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